

THE FIVE CENT

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## Shorty and the Count

OR,

## The Two Great Unmashed.

A Sequel to "SHORTY JR. ON HIS EAR."

By the Author of "Shorty," Etc., Etc.

CHAPTER I.

SHORTY at once assumed supreme command of the show.

He had played a sort of secondary part while the kid was the boss, but now we find our old friend once more to the front, and ready, as he always has been

When he took control of the show, all parties connected with it quickly learned that there was only one boss in the building.

Which his handsome name was Shorty.

Shanks kept remarkably quiet, and attended strictly to the financial affairs of the concern and nothing else.

Our little hero ran the shop and took entire charge of the fun.

And being the head of the house made him feel like another man.

It filled him with new life, made his blood jump quicker through his veins—his bearing became freer, easier, and more reckless; his eyes fairly glistened with merriment, and the comical grin that had always found a lodgment on his face grew broader and mellow as if its owner had made up his mind that life itself was the greatest joke ever perpetrated, and that it was best for one to laugh while one had the opportunity.

of misery, wearin' a face two foot long—why, ol' man, Death 'll call laughter even him some day sure."

Since Shorty had become boss showman, he rather looked down on his son, Shorty, Junior.

He regarded him as a boy who had been allowed to have his own way too long—as a youngster who had slipped into authority by pure force of cheek, when he should, in reality, have only been a subordinate.

"Dat dam little runt of mine," he soliloquised, "got 'long ter far 'head altogidder. He's smart 's chain lite-nin', an' I can't go back on him fer bein' a chip of der ol' block, but in future he's got ter take a back seat clean way up in der gallery; 'cause Shorty himself is goin' ter p'rade ter der front an' ber a solid man."

It was all right for his dad to pitch into the kid, but if anybody else had ventured to breathe a word against that hopeful young imp, Shorty would have gone for him hot and heavy.



"Can such things be and overcome us like a summer cloud?" spouted the count.

from the hour he first lit on this big ball of dirt we call the earth, to put up rackets, make things lively, and have both hands deep in any fun that may be going forward.

"It's better ter laff dan ter cry, yer kin bet," Shorty used to observe. "Tak' der chap dat goes trough life widout a smile—a humpin' himself 'long on der road

As for the kid, himself, he was fairly wallowing in pleasure.

His life had been a sort of long holiday, but then he had not been entirely free from the cares of business



for many months, so that now, having nothing in the world to bother him, he traveled with slackened reins and reveled in rackets from morning till night.

He dusted up the road every fine afternoon behind his horse "Buster," and, being one of the best known lads in the city, and as free with his money as he was with his jokes, he became an immense favorite with the horsemen, and drew around him as jolly a gang as could be found if one searched the wide world over.

He didn't give his dad a moment's peace, and regarded a day as very badly spent, indeed, if he couldn't put up one job at least on his worthy progenitor.

His modes of keeping the old man in hot water were various.

While talking one afternoon, Shorty told the kid that he wanted more help in the office.

"Yer see dere is a good deal runnin' round ter ber done," he said.

"Where?" interrupted Chip. "Runnin' round der corner fer yer beer?"

"Shet up!" roared Shorty. "Dere's lots of little tings ter ber done an' I want's a boy. Jist a small shaver yer know."

"A little 'un fer a cent."

"Yes; sent on errands. Can't yer git mer some sort of a shaver, kid?"

"Tink I knows der very party yer want, an' I'll fetch him 'round ter-morrer," was the answer.

The next morning the kid walked in the show, bringing along a strapping fellow who stood over six feet high.

"Dere, dad," said Chip, introducing the man, "I guess here's a boy dat'll suit yer every time."

"Call dat a boy?" cried Shorty, surveying the stranger's sturdy proportions. "Why, yer dern fool, I wanted a small chap, a little shaver."

"Dat's all rite dad," replied the kid, looking as innocent as a lamb, "he's a little shaver. Keeps der barber-shop up der street."

Saying this, he got out as quickly as possible, and left his dad darning things generally up hill and down.

Soon after this Shorty Junior sent his dad a note which ran as follows:

"DEAR SUB.—Heering as yer am in want of Kurosities, it dose me prowd tu invite yer tu Kome up an' seami jint the bigist in the world. If yer want mijint inter yure show, kall onter me ter ficks terms.  
"yours, A. Skulp, Bowery."

Shorty puzzled over this communication for some time, before he understood exactly what Mr. Skulp was driving at.

At length he tumbled.

"Oh, I see now," he exclaimed, "it's as clear as a hole trough a forty foot ladder. Der man wants mer ter come up an' see his 'jint.' He means his giant. I'll tak' him in sure pop."

He at once put on his hat and started.

"A new giant, hey, an' der biggest in der world," he thought to himself on the way down. "A rattling big rooster dat stands ten feet high I'll bet. Does I want him? Does a duck want water? I'll show dat mis'able snide of a kid dat I kin scoop in curiosities as well as he kin. If dis giant pans out as good as I tink he will, I'll make dat boy of mine sick."

He finally found Mr. Skulp and introduced himself.

Mr. Skulp was a modeler and an Irishman. His honest face beamed with good humor and his hands were very dirty.

"Arrah, Mr. Shorty," he cried, "sure thin ye have come up ter see me jint? It's proud I am ter show ye."

"Trot him rite 'long out," said our hero. "I's look-in' fer dat kind of ting all der while."

"Step this way, sur," exclaimed Skulp, going to the end of his shop. "There, den, what der yer think of that?"

He opened a door and Shorty looked in a little room. It seemed to be empty.

"Where's der giant?" asked he, gazing anxiously about.

"There it is in th' corner. Th' biggest ever made," exclaimed Mr. Skulp.

All Shorty could see was a large plaster joint of some animal, probably an elephant.

"Does yer call dat a giant?" he roared, as mad as a March hare.

"Av course it's er jint," was the answer. "Jint of er camool or an elephant, I dunno which."

Shorty rushed out of that shop, and swore all the way back to the show.

"Dat's one of der kid's blasted rackets, I'll bet a sixteen dollar gold piece," he cried. "I's gettin' disgusted wid dat imp, an' 'f he don't tak' care I'll git ser-hunk dat he'll wish a mountain had tumbled on him 'fore he was ever born."

The next day the kid came bustling in, looking as important as a newly-elected alderman.

"Mornin', dad," he said, briskly. "I want ter see yer on bizness."

"Look here, mer son," began Shorty, "what kind of a racket was dat yer give mer yisterday, 'bout dat giant?"

"What giant?" asked the kid, turning short on his old man. "What yer givin' mer now?"

"Why, didn't yer send mer dat note tellin' mer ter go ter Skulp's ter see a giant?"

"Never heard of sich a party in mer life," answered Chip, shaking his head, and looking as if he believed Skulp to be a myth, and even regarded giants as something only to be found in old-fashioned fairy tales.

The old man eyed him suspiciously, and muttered:

"Tak' care, boy, yer fadder 'll do someting some day dat 'll sprize yer."

"I've got someting else ter do 'sides puttin' up rackets all der while," remarked the kid, in an injured tone. "Yer allers lay everyting on me."

"Boy, I've got a hand I'll lay on yer some fine morn-

in', and if ever I goes fer yer, y'll wish yer had gone west years ago."

"I isn't der sort of rooster ter crow up wid a new country. New York's good nuff fer mer rite 'long. What's der use in growlin' when I've come ter see yer on most 'ticular bizness?"

"Well, what is yer after now?" asked Shorty.

"I've bin doin' a big ting, dad," was the answer.

"I've scooped in a curiosity dat jist lays over 'em all."

"What is it—a hen?" grinned Shorty.

"Ner; I ain't on dat lay. Dad, I've got a whale fer yer."

"Whale! I declare!"

"Dis is a white whale, seventeen foot long."

"Go long. Sunfish on a plate."

"No, dad; I've givin' it ter yer plumb strait. Had him fetched all der way from Labrador."

"Mer son, yer better keep him yerself."

"What the dooce do I want wid him?"

"Fish is good fer de brain; yer better eat him fer yer breakfast."

"I've been ter a heap of trouble ter git dis feller on here, an' now yer doesn't take no stock in him."

"Is he as big as a shad?" asked Shorty, with a wink.

"Shad ain't a shadder of him."

"Speakin' of shad. Does yer know how dat fish goes up a ribber?"

"Swims up, I s'pose."

"Ner; shad rows up."

"Roes by any odder name would smell as sweet. Here, I want ter talk ter yer 'bout dis whale. We kin have a tank put up on der first floor, and he'll draw crowds of visitors. I's bin over six months tryin' ter git dis fish, an' now dat he's here, I want yer to look out after him."

The kid went on to explain how this whale had been captured, how he had been kept alive on the long voyage, and in fact told such a straight story that his dad finally got deeply interested.

"Where's he now?" he asked.

"He's on der brig *Polly Ann*, pier ten," was the answer.

"Oh, *Polly Ann* brig him here did she? Well, mer son, guess a white whale will be a big ting 'f we kin keep him 'live."

"Well, 'f he dies, he dies, an' dat's all 'bout it."

"Ner, 'f he dies dat's oil about it."

"Dad, dat joke ain't zactly 'cordin ter *Hoyle*, but it'll pass. Dere's all der papers 'bout dis bizness, an' I tinks der best ting yer kin do is ter git a big truck an' go rite down after him. Dey's got him in a small tank now, and all ye'll have ter do is ter have him histed out of der boat, an' cart him rite up here ter der show."

"Guess dat's 'bout der correct ting," answered Shorty, who by this time had got whale on the brain. "I might's well go now an' git through wid der job."

"All rite," said Chip. "In der mean time I'll git a carpenter an' see 'bout havin' a tank made."

As soon as Shorty left, the kid got out a big bill and placed it in front of the show.

"A LIVING WHITE WHALE,

"Twenty-five Feet Long,

"SWIMMING AND SPOUTING;

"To-morrow! To-morrow!"

This attracted a crowd, and many people applied at the box office for further information. They were told to come next day.

In the meantime Shorty himself had hired a truck and was on his way to the dock.

He had secured a large four-horse truck, one of the kind that is used for carrying marble or heavy machinery.

When he arrived at the pier he found it crowded with carts, boxes, barrels, bales, and men. After much crowding and hard swearing, the ponderous truck was finally backed down the dock alongside the *Polly Ann*.

Shorty skipped briskly aboard the brig and inquired for the captain. The skipper came promptly forward and our hero introduced himself.

"I've come after dat fish, cap," he exclaimed. "I spects yer is had heap of trouble wid der monster, hey?"

"Not much," was the answer. "What are you goin' to do with that ere big truck?"

"Tak' der whale away on it."

The captain looked at our friend in blank surprise, but Shorty was too much excited to notice him.

"Give us a look at him, cap; I's jist a-dyin' ter git mer glimmers on him."

"Well," began the skipper, slowly, "your son, the kid, ordered this fish, an' I got him."

"Certainly—dat's rite. Where is he?"

"There."

Shorty looked in the direction pointed out, and at first saw nothing. Then he looked again, and then he looked at the captain.

"Dat him?" he asked, quietly.

"That is the only fish in this boat," was the answer.

"Well, I'm berdam!"

And then Shorty got red and white by turns, and swore, and pranced around, and raised the deuce generally.

The enormous whale he had come to remove on a great four-horse truck, proved to be a little thing about the size of a gold-fish, and could have been easily carried away in a man's pocket.

He got off of that ship and started back for the show, mad all the way through.

When he saw the placard announcing the coming of that white whale fluttering in the breeze, he wildly tore it down, and rushed into the show in search of his hopeful son.

"I'll whale him. I'll make him blubber, 'f i ketch him!" he howled. "Where is he?"

The kid wisely kept out of his dad's way till he

had somewhat cooled off, which, by the way, was not for some time, as, wherever he went, somebody was bound to ask:

"How's that big whale of yours, to-day?"

Shorty stood in the door of the show, softly whistling a merry tune, and dreaming of quitting the city and taking once more to the road.

He had always been of a roving disposition, and never felt so completely happy as when traveling about from place to place.

His long residence in town had made him somewhat rusty, and now that the fine weather had come, he longed for green fields, babbling brooks, twittering birds, and country rackets.

And, besides, he was half-inclined to shake the kid for a while, any how.

"Der rooster 's got ter much time on han' fer me ter try ter git hunk wid him, an' as I won't ber crushed, I tink I'd better glide."

His thoughts were suddenly interrupted. A man stepped up briskly and addressed him:

"Is your name Mr. Shorty?" asked the stranger.

"Yer guessed it fust time."

"Ah! I am proud to know you."

The stranger seized Shorty's hand and shook it heartily.

"Yer look's 'fye'd ber proud ter know most anybody," answered Shorty, gunning the stranger from head to foot.

"My friend," the newcomer went on, "if so I may call you—"

"Pends on what kind of a han' yer ter 'call' mer."

"I wish to have a long conversation w—"

"How does yer chuck chin, by der yard?"

"An important conversation, sir."

"I know. I spects yer want ter borror a dollar."

The stranger waved his hand scornfully, as if there was one thing on earth that he despised more than another, it was a dollar.

"Important business, sir," he said.

"Come 'long," cried Shorty, "we'll have a anyhow."

As they walk to the private office let us see the stranger closely, as he is destined to play no small part in this story.

He was a very tall, thin man, with a clean, shiny face, and long, wavy hair.

It is best not to be too positive, so that we can only say, speaking politically, his hair might have been a wig.

His clothes were of the deepest black, and such spots as too frequent brushes with poverty had worn threadbare, were carefully inked over.

He sported a felt hat, that was mostly brim, carried an eye-glass and a cane, and kept his coat so closely buttoned up to his very chin as to create gloomy suspicions in the minds of strangers, that he indulged in a most remarkable absence of linen.

Upon the whole he looked like a man who had overstayed his time—looked as if he had been handed down from a former generation, passed by, and forgotten.

His age was even uncertain, but he was certainly "more than seven."

He spoke in a sharp, quick way, frequently and rapidly repeating his questions with a rising inflection of voice till the final word came out with a roar.

His manner of conversation forcibly reminded one of bubbles popping up out of a freshly opened bottle of lager beer.

"Well," said Shorty, when they were seated, "go it."

"You know me, sir?" was the first question asked, as if an affirmative answer was expected as a matter of course.

"Can't say as I does."

"And this is fame! Sir, I am a count."

"What yer countin', oysters?"

"Bah! I am Rumford! Count Rumford! Do you know me now—know me now—know me now?"

"Rumford," mused Shorty, "I knows der fust part of yer name tip-top."

"Sir," continued the count with a frown; "look at me!"

"I see yer. Dis style four hundred fer a cent."

"I play Shakespeare!"

"What is yer playin' him fer, a sardine?"

"I play him, as you are pleased to term it, for a hundred dollars a night."

He folded his arms on his breast and glanced at his questioner.

"What's der little game, bluff?"

"Do you wish to insult me—insult me—insult ME?"

"Yer got a soft ting in dis man Shakespeare, ain't yer?"

"Soft thing? Why, gad, man, did you never hear of Shakespeare?"

"Was he ever in der show bizness in dis country?"

"Why, he lived in England. He—"

"Does yer hear from him putty reg'lar?"

"Good heavens! He is dead! Been dead for years!"

"Tort yer jist said he lived in England."

The count arose, and looking as black as a thunder cloud, strode backward and forward across the floor.

"Can such things be and overcome us like a summer cloud?" he stopped to spout.

"I know what'll overcome yer quicker den a summer cloud will," observed Shorty.

"What sir—what sir—what sir?"

"Couple of stiff gin-cocktails."

"I came here to talk business to you. I am an actor."

"What! A spouter?"

"A tragedian—a tragedian, sir!"

"I was a tragedian myself once when I was hard up. Done mer 'spoutin' at mer 'uncle's."

"Understand me, sir. I play on the stage."

"What wid, a horse?"

The count sat down, looking discouraged.



"You do not seem to comprehend," he gently intimated.

"I don't tumble, yer mean."

"Exactly. You fail to fall. I play Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, in fact, a round of legitimate characters."

"Oh, yer is one of dem 'roarers,' is yer?"

"I am looking for an engagement."

"Hol' on. I got half a dozen fellers out here doin' nuffin'. I'll call 'em in an' let 'em help yer look fer it. Is yer certain yer lost it 'round here?"

The count smote his manly breast at the immediate risk of knocking a hole in his tender coat.

"I see you are not disposed to listen to me," he said, arising and grasping his hat. "Farewell, I will see you again."

"Come in when yer can't stay ser long."

"I will call upon you once more—once more."

"Run in an' see mer nex' week when I's out of town."

The count bowed low, started for the door, hesitated, and came back—came back like a gentleman about to grant a favor.

"In your preliminary remarks," he said, "your conversation turned towards—as in short, a dollar—a dollar, sir! a tender subject."

"Legal tender subject," grinned Shorty.

"Well, sir, I borrow a dollar, under these con-

ances up to that hour, he began to grow easier in his mind.

"Nonsense!" he exclaimed. "Doesn't 'spect dere is a bearded woman widdin five hundred miles of der town."

With this comforting reflection, all thoughts of the thing were dismissed.

Early in the afternoon a carriage dashed up to the door, a lady, closely veiled, got out, and quickly entered the show.

She inquired for Shorty, and the boss was sent for.

"What kin I do fer yer, mum?" he asked, faintly trying to peep through the thick covering that concealed her features.

"Not here; not here," she exclaimed in a soft voice.

Shorty promptly led the way to the office, where they were alone.

"Now, den, who is yer, an' what does yer want?" he politely inquired.

"I am the bearded woman, and I want you!" was the answer.

She threw the veil from her face, and with such a long, luxurious set of whiskers as she sported, looked as lovesick as possible.

Shorty fell back thunderstruck. Here stood the woman before him, rather pretty, plump, and bearded like a Turk.

"Me own, me darling Shorty!" she cried, making a

"This is ter much," he gasped. "D—n that boy of mine. I'll kill him! I'll never hear der las' of dis. Only one ting left fer mer ter der, an' dat's ter git up an' git out of dis town at once."

In the lobby he met Count Rumford.

"I have called," he began, "in relation to an extension of time on that small loan—what's the matter, my friend?" he interrupted himself to ask, seeing that Shorty was clear off his center.

"Darn boy of mine got the best of mer," was the reply.

"Ah! crushed yer? Never be crushed, never!"

"Look here," said Shorty, quickly, "yer want travel an' play, don't yer?"

"I do, good my lord."

"All rite, den, tip us yer flipper. I'll furnish der sugar an' manage the affair an' yer do der actin', an' we'll go from one end of dis country ter der nudder an' announce ourselves all over as der Two Great Unmashed."

## CHAPTER II.

SHORTY and the count soon came to an agreement as far as terms were concerned, and it was determined to shake the dust of New York from their feet as quickly as possible.



The Count quickly climbed up one of the side scenes, and managed by drawing up his legs, to get out of harm's way.

ditions. Mark the conditions! I am to be allowed to repay it the first thing to-morrow morning."

Shorty, admiring the cheek of the seedy man, gave him a dollar and dismissed him, supposing that he would never set eyes on him again.

"Curious cove dat," he muttered, as he sat thinking the interview over.

"Ber Jove!" he suddenly exclaimed, starting up. "Der very ting. Why didn't I tink of it? I want ter travel an' so does he. Bet he'll draw like a plaster, ter. Mus' hunt dat ol' chap up, an' have a chin wid him, sure."

This new idea kept running in his head all day, and the more he thought of it the better he liked it.

"Money an' rackets both," he mused, "an' I'll hunt him up fust ting in the mornin'."

But the next day brought him a new trouble, which, for a while, drove both the count and the scheme from his head.

Picking up the morning paper the first thing his eye lit on was this:

"WANTED.—Correspondence with a bearded lady, with a view to matrimony. Address Mr. Shorty, Great American Show."

To say that he was wild doesn't convey any idea of his condition. He went tearing around like a crazy man, and if he could have got hold of the kid—he at once set him down as the author of the advertisement—he would have half killed him.

Up to twelve o'clock he fumed and fretted, growled and swore. As no bearded lady had put in an appear-

sudden dive for him. "I love you already! Yo' have sent for me an' I have come! Be mine! Be mine!"

"Be hanged if I do!" yelled Shorty, making a bolt for the door. "Git out! I'll call der perlice!"

He ran out in the main part of the show, closely followed by she of the beard.

The place was crowded with visitors and employees. The bearded woman was fleet of foot, and before Shorty got far, she had captured him.

"Me only love!" she shrieked, and raising our little hero in her arms, she began hugging and kissing him in the most affectionate way possible.

Everybody in the place gathered around and set up a shout.

"Go it, ol' gal!"

"Kiss him fer his mother!"

"Who's your barber?"

Shorty howled, kicked and struggled, and finally squirmed himself loose.

As he struck the floor who should he see but his untamable son, the kid, splitting his sides with laughter. The old man never said a word, but grabbing a club he went for that boy.

"Look out fer yerself, Bill," roared Chip to the bearded lady, "an' I'll see yer later."

He made a bee line for the door, and he and "Bill," who was now carrying his whiskers in his hand, gained the coach before the irate Shorty could overtake them, and were rapidly rattled away.

Shorty came back covered with confusion and pale with rage. He could still hear the cries of the people within, and this didn't tend to soothe him a bit.

They adjourned to a saloon hard by to "wet" the partnership.

A prospect of steady employment at his favorite profession caused the count to swell out his chest like a prize turkey cock and put on lordly and patronizing airs.

"My dear, though comparatively new friend, Mr. Shorty," he exclaimed over his beer, "your prospects are now bright. Count Rumford, the great unmashed, illuminates all yer future. As my chosen companion I introduce you to fortune! fortune, sir! Seize her boldly by the hand, march on to greatness, and remember me, me!"

"I promises rite now," answered Shorty, "dat even if yer gits both yer handsome legs cut off on der railroad, I'll remember yer."

"Tis well. Stick by Count Rumford and he will make a man of yer."

"Git mer in first-class shape ter waltz ter der poorhouse, hey?"

"Poorhouse! We will never play to a poorhouse. Thousands of delighted spectators will crowd the vast auditorium of each and every theater where I appear! I, I, I! We will be received with deafening shouts of applause—"

"An' spiled eggs."

"The first people of the various cities will wait upon us—"

"Yes, sheriffs."

"Hundreds will nightly be turned from the doors—"

"All deadheads."



"And millions will flow in till our purses will become fat and bloated, and we will r-r-roll in wealth!" He said this with a magnificent wave of his hand towards the ceiling, as if inviting Shorty to get right up there and indulge in a preliminary roll to see how he was going to like it when rolling should become a steady thing.

Then he called for two more beers.

"I feel rich already," he went on to say, getting out his pocketbook—an imposing affair, such a pocketbook as an Astor or a Vanderbilt might keep to carry their clothes in. He went through it carefully, searching in all the corners.

"Is yer lookin' fer anyting?" grinned Shorty.

"Yes," nodded the count.

"Why doesn't yer jump rite inside an' hunt fer it?"

The count regarded his questioner with a look of mingled scorn and beer.

"Eh! by the way," he suddenly exclaimed, with the air of a man about to impart valued information, "have you such a thing as ten cents about you?"

"All correct," laughed Shorty; "beer is all paid fer."

And then the count looked grieved.

"Never again, my young friend; never again," he murmured, pathetically; "you have touched me to the quick. When Count Rumford invites you to accept of his hospitality, remember, the count's pocketbook is *always* empty—I mean, open."

"Why doesn't yer pour some beer in it?"

"Beer in it?"

"Certainly; dat's der quickest way ter git it full."

The count rarely laughed. He was so wrapped up in himself, so puffed up with his importance, that he was perfectly oblivious to jokes, jibes or ridicule.

"Ah, speaking of finances," he observed, intently regarding his now empty glass, "as we are now partners, perhaps you need a small advance of ready cash?"

"Nary cash," answered Shorty, with a wink. "Mebbe yer want it yerself?"

"Not at all—not at all," quickly answered the count. "Unless, indeed, that is—not an advance, you understand; a trifle, a mere trifle. Say five dollars."

"Does yer trifle often wid people dat way?" asked Shorty, plunking out the money.

The count at once seized the bill and hid it from view.

"We start at the earliest possible moment," he inquired, "do we not?"

"We'll bounce out of dis town ter-morrer. I'll call ter yer hotel fer yer."

"Impossible—impossible!" cried Rumford. "I will meet you. You see, at present I am stopping with a friend at the Fifth Avenue."

"South?" said Shorty.

"Yes; from the South," replied the count, hastily. "I must go up there at once."

He shook hands with his partner, walked out of the saloon, and started down town.

"Never strike der Fifth Avenue dat way," laughed Shorty to himself; "but den mebbe der ol' man's goin' down to hire a carriage."

After his interview with the count, our little hero went about getting a company together.

"Want's der baddest actors I kin git," he exclaimed. "Regular snides. Der count is ter ber der hull 'traction, and der rest won't 'mount ter shucks."

He went up to the boulevard on Fourteenth street, and in fifteen minutes scooped in as fine a collection of "sticks" and barn-stormers as the country could produce.

They were all anxious to play, and ready to go anywhere; and could be hired at the very lowest terms.

Tragedians from Oshkosh, the lightest kind of light comedians from Peoria, and walking gentlemen from Kalamazoo, who had evidently been doing most of their walking, lately, on their uppers.

Still they were a jolly lot, full of jokes and stories, and mostly carried their wardrobes done up in newspapers.

Shorty ordered them to be at the ferry next morning at eight o'clock sharp.

The balance of his arrangements were soon completed, and he was ready to skip.

Philadelphia was the town selected to open in, and Fox's, the theater.

Shorty had often heard of the count before he met him, but not knowing anything in particular about him had never paid any attention to the career of the distinguished individual.

Now that he had hired him, he found the count to be one of the best known men in the profession.

"Jist what I wants," mused Shorty. "Give der ol' man nudder chance an' have lots of fun at der same time."

All the preparations had been made in secret, as he didn't want either the Kid or Shanks to know where he had gone.

When the time arrived for him to quit New York, he slipped out of the hotel without saying a word to his companions, and bolted off to the ferry to meet the count and his company.

They were all there, and several of them looked as if they had "been there" all night.

Shorty gave them a "bracer" all around, and started them for the cars.

And then the great unmashed approached. He carried a small bag, a cane, and an umbrella; and wore, though the day was a warm one, a big winter ulster.

He looked like a fifth-class senator out of a job.

Just before he saw Shorty he halted in front of a peanut stand and got out a five cent piece. He examined the man's stock as carefully as if he was going to buy out the whole establishment, hesitated for a few moments, and then picking up his bag which he had set down, he waved the peanut merchant a lordly adieu, and marched into a saloon and purchased a glass of beer.

Shorty followed him in, and after shaking hands with him, exclaimed:

"Is yer goin' ter der anyting?"

"I am," answered the count.

"Now yer is talkin'. Les' see what I'll have dis mornin'?"

"But not here," interrupted the count. "In Philadelphia."

"Oh, dat's ter thin," growled Shorty. "Here, land-lord, give us 'nudder beer, anyhow."

"Now, den, count," continued Shorty, raising his glass, "here's ter der tree R's: Readin', Ritin', an' Rackets!"

"Yes," cried the unmashed, throwing open his ulster, as if he was about to fly; "and here is to the three C's: Courage! Cash! the Count!"

"Yer sees mer an' goes one better; an' now seize dat carpet sack of your'n an' come 'long," laughed Shorty.

They were soon rattling on their way to the Quaker City.

The count was in high feather and talked incessantly. There was nothing mean about Rumford—as far as conversation was concerned—for he spouted so that everybody could hear him—and no one else.

Shorty had plenty of fun coddling his illustrious friend, till a slight accident to the cars at Trenton put a stop to it.

Finding that they were to be detained for an hour or so, our hero proposed to the count to take a stroll through the town, and see what was to be seen.

And doing this, Shorty at once learned what a popular man the great unmashed really was.

Everybody knew him, and the one universal remark was:

"Hello, here's the count!"

"What a well-known man am I!" exclaimed Rumford. "You see, my dear sir, the population bows to my rank, my fame, my genius! Genius, sir, *genius*! All leading citizens, every one."

"Looks like leadin' citizens," said Shorty. "Leadin' putty hard lives."

The count nodded to the right and left, and the first thing Shorty knew, they were being followed by a gang of ragamuffins, who suddenly began to sing:

"Tramp, tramp, tramp,

The boys are marching."

"Well, dis is jist the gayest ol' rooster I ever struck," mused Shorty, taking a side glance at the smiling and delighted count. "Darn if he ain't scoopin' all dis dead give away in fer plumb earnest. Oughter try some kind of racket on him, ter see how he likes dat kind of ting."

He slipped away from his companion, and in ten minutes had his plans all laid.

He spoke to several parties, and it was quickly agreed to give the great unmashed a public reception by the leading citizens of Trenton.

A committee waited upon him—he was in the bar-room taking a drink and explaining to the barkeeper that it was all right, as he would call around in the morning and settle—and the spokesman thus addressed him:

"Most noble count, we, the representative men of Trenton, desiring to show our appreciation of your great power and ability, wish to give you an informal reception, and humbly beg of you to favor us with a short address."

At this marked display of respect, the count could hardly contain himself. He drew his figure up proudly, removed his hat, bowed and replied:

"Gentlemen of Trenton, you do me an honor that I am certain I merit. This city has listened to a Washington, a Hamilton, a Clay, a Webster. Now it shall listen to me. To Count Rumford, the Great Unmashed, I place myself in your hands, gentlemen. I am ready."

Shorty, who had been fixing things, proposed that as the train must shortly go, the count speak from the depot platform. This was at once agreed to.

Supported on either side by a judge and a lawyer, the hero of the hour was conducted up the street, followed by a band of men, women and children, who hooted and howled, and sang:

"See the conquering hero comes."

Shorty had got hold of an old American flag which he hung around the rear platform of the last car.

The count was taken to this temporary rostrum and began to speak at once.

"Ladies and gentlemen. When I, the great Count Rumford gaze on this emblem of liberty," here he wildly clutched the flag, "the personification of—"

"Louder! Louder!"

"Git him a trumpet!"

"He don't hold the cards an' can't trump it!"

"The great forefathers of the revolution," was the next part of the address heard, "offered up their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor—"

"On er what?"

"On er bender!"

"Dat ain't der real count; it's Buffalo Bill!"

"Pipe his hat!"

"When did yer git yer ulster out of pawn?"

"Chaw yer ear an' make yer voice sweet."

Such cries and howls went up that not another word of the speech could be heard even by those near by.

But the noble orator went right on regardless of everything.

Shorty, who had all fixed, nodded to the conductor, who nodded in return.

Then a beautiful young lady pushed her way through the crowd. She carried an enormous bouquet and was greeted with a howl. She stood just out of the count's reach.

"Take th' flower, Rummy!"

"Put 'em in yer button-hole!"

"Put 'em down yer throat!"

The count regarded the fair donor with a tender look, the lady smiled and held out the bouquet.

He was just going to take it, when who—whoop!

went the whistle, puff! puff! snorted the engine, and off went the train.

And then everybody set up a roar of laughter, and the count was wild with rage.

"Stop the cars!" he yelled. "Stop the cars, *immediately*! How dare you insult a gentleman of my rank thus?"

"Rank nonsense!" bawled a passenger.

"Go soak yer head!" advised a brakeman.

"Take a walk!" cried the conductor.

The count passed into a forward car and didn't say another word during the journey.

Arriving in town Shorty took his company to a quiet hotel, where he had stopped before, and at once began to prepare for the count's appearance.

The first thing was to advertise his attraction largely. He filled the city with big bills and little ones, all announcing

#### FIRST TIME IN TEN YEARS!

COUNT RUMFORD, THE GREAT UNMASHED.

Will Positively Appear To-morrow Night.

The coming of the count was the town talk, everybody knew or had heard of him, especially the boys, who at once laid out to have a regular picnic.

This is the notice Shorty had put in all the morning papers:

#### FOX'S THEATER.

After Several Years Absence,

COUNT RUMFORD, THE GREAT UNMASHED TRAGEDIAN, Has Kindly Consented to Once More Re-appear in Philadelphia!

Where He will Renew His Former Triumphs.

MACBETH!

MACBETH!

Being the Play Selected.

"PHILA.—March, 1878.

"MOST NOBLE COUNT.—We, the undersigned, being desirous of judging for ourselves, cordially invite you to give a round of your celebrated Shakesperian characters in our city.

"Most Respectfully yours,

"G. W. Childs, A. M.; John Smith, W. M. Tweed, (late of Spain); Tony Drexel, Wm. Kimball, A. D. S.; Deacon Richard Smith, (the truly good); George Francis Train, George, the Count Joannes, and hundreds of others."

It was slyly hinted in the *Amusement Notes*, that on this occasion, perhaps, G. W. Childs, A. M., the well-known obituary bard, would recite his beautiful poem, beginning with

"Affection sore, long time she bore."

These notices set the town ablaze, and when the eventful night rolled round people began pouring into the theater at an early hour in streams.

"Golly," laughed Shorty, who was looking after the receipts, "dis is der best in der world. Keeps on like dis long we'll have more money din we knows what ter do wid."

The count was already dressed, and except being a little sharp in his legs made a very good-looking Macbeth indeed.

He bossed the other actors around unmercifully, never giving them a moment's peace. He fretted and raved, swore that not a man or woman was properly dressed, and pronounced everyone of them individually as being "exceedingly 'queer' sir."

Knowing what they had to undergo when they went on to play they paid him but little attention.

The crowd kept swarming into the theater till it was literally packed, and they kept up an incessant howling, cat-calling and whistling.

When the music came on the fun began.

Give us "The Night Before Larry was Stretched!"

"Send out for more wind for th' trombonist!"

"Let Jimmy Morgan play the organ!"

"Pipe the cur wid th' bass fiddle!"

"Does yer live in dat when yer home?"

"Why don't yer stand inside of it an' play?"

And so amid jeers and laughter they kept up the din till the curtain was raised.

For a moment all was silent; and then the audience broke out afresh. They went for the witches bad, calling them Old Mother Hubbard, Uncle Ned and Cinderella.

"Look at der galls wid der sticks!"

"Whiches der welches, an' which's der sticks?"

And they joined in with the songs, and invited the "imperfect speakers" to dance the essence of ol' Virginny.

When the count appeared he received a perfect ovation. Handkerchiefs and hats were waved, cheer upon cheer rent the air, and men hallooed themselves hoarse.

The great unmashed bowed deeply many times, and was, without any exception, at that moment the proudest and happiest man in the world.

In another moment he wasn't.

They went for him.

"Hello, Count!"

"How are you, William Henry Rumford?"

"Sail in, Mickbeth!"

"An' tumble to his bare legs!"

"Why, William Henry, you ought to be ashamed!"

"Go put on your pants!"

"He *kilt* somebody ter git dat suit!"

"How is dat for high, Lander?"

The count, paying but little attention to his tormentors, went on with his scene, though not a word he uttered could be heard. Indeed, it is doubtful if a dozen lines of the play were audible during the whole evening.

The unmashed was boiling with suppressed rage, while the balance of the actors, knowing their salaries were sure, took the guying good-humoredly.



The murder scene was capitally "done"—by the audience.

"Is this a dagger which I see before me?" cried the count, holding forth his hand and looking as if he saw the ghosts of all his creditors armed with their unpaid bills, getting ready to go for him.

"Call dat ting yer holdin' up er dagger?"

"It's a ham!"

"It's er leg of mutton!"

"What a hand to play poker with!"

"Send it to der wash!"

And before this when Lady Macbeth bids her husband "Screw your courage to the sticking place," the house with one accord tended him the very best of advice.

"Don't yer do it, William Henry!"

"She's er b-a-d woman!"

"She's puttin' up er big job on you!"

"Fire her out!"

"Go to Chicago an' git a divorce!"

"Git her to sign der pledge an' reform!"

When the curtain was down what few people did not go out to take a "smile" amused themselves by guying the musicians and singing queer songs with immense choruses.

During the banquet scene not a solitary word spoken on the stage could be heard.

"He oughter bin killed long ago!"

"Take him out and kill him again!"

And when Macbeth saw the ghost, and began to stagger, they cried:

"Look out for de ol' man!"

"Brace up, ol' man! He ain't a real ghost!"

"Set up another keg of lager, an' enjoy yourself!"

The ghost soon withdrew, and the company was dismissed with the well known lines.

"Stand not upon the order of your going."

"But go at once."

"Yes, go it!"

"Never come back!"

"Go drowned yerselves!"

"Hire out for tobacco signs!"

The rest of the act they sternly refused to have anything to do with, preferring to sing the "Sweet By and By," and, "Sunday Night when th' Parlor is Full."

As for the fourth act, it was a blank. People wandered on and off the stage, but what business they had there, or what they were saying nobody seemed to know or care.

The audience was very impartial in their guying, handing it out to men and women alike; although of course the Count came in for the lion's share.

When Lady Macbeth came on, in the sleep walking scene, she was greeted with a long howl.

"Ain't you awful!"

At sight of the excited canine, the valiant Macduff took to his heels, leaving Macbeth to face the enemy alone.

The dog, seeming to comprehend that the Count was the cause of his unpleasant predicament, went for him at once.

And the Count not relishing that sort of thing, quickly climbed up one of the side scenes, and managed by drawing up his legs, to get out of harm's way.

It was the most ridiculous sight ever seen on a stage, and as the audience was now quite unmanageable, nothing was left to do but drop the curtain.

### PART III.

We left the count clinging to one of the side scenes, with the dog snapping at his heels.

The great unmashed roared lustily for somebody to drive the ferocious brute away, but all hands pretended to be afraid to venture near him.

Finally Shorty, who had been heartily enjoying the count's predicament, got a net, and, throwing it around the barking cur, managed to secure him.

Instead of tumbling him out in the street, he quietly carried him to Rumford's dressing-room, and, pulling open the door, fired him in.

"Have anudder racket on der ol' man yit," he grinned,



Barkis was willing. Never was the count so happy as when addressing his fellow-men; giving them the benefit of his mighty intellect.

"Oh look at th' two wicked people!" was the cry when the murderers came on.

"Gun der fust one! Dat's Bill der biter!"

"An' his pal is Hank der heeler!"

"William Henry, if you don't stop killin' folks we'll call th' police!"

"Where's Banquo?"

"Gone to a fero bank-o!"

"He copped der king an' lost!"

"Give 'em a quarter apiece an' let 'em go!"

After dismissing the murderers and speaking the lines:

"Sweet remembrancer!

Now good digestion wait on appetite

And health on both!"

—though not a soul heard him—the uproar became terrific.

"Now der feed begins!"

"Go fer yer royal hash!"

"Cut dat wooden ham an' pass it round!"

"Send out fer anudder quart of beer!"

"Do yer give bread wid one fish ball?"

"Roast beef, rare, no gravy!"

"A biled turkey on toast!"

"Sleeve buttons an' a solid shot!"

"Stewed liver, no bone!"

Then the ghost of the murdered Banquo entered, pointing to his gory throat.

"Tak' off dat red flannel!"

"Oh, what a bad actor!"

"Where did dey ketch you?"

"Count, swap him off for a brass breast-pin!"

"Oh, my!"

"Haven't you forgotten something?"

"Let th' woman be; she's dreamin' policy numbers!"

"Suppose the Count should see you now!"

"That's right; wash your hands and go to bed."

And then the whole house yelled in chorus:

"To bed! To bed! To bed!"

Till the woman retired.

The Count met Macduff.

And then there was more trouble.

"Now, William Henry, go right in and carve him!"

"Never mind th' play, kill him!"

"Yes, he's ner good; slice him!"

"Hit him with a brick!"

"Mash him with a club!"

"Bite his leg off!"

At this the gallery began to sing:

"You get a chisel, and I'll get a saw,

And we'll hack the two legs off my mother-in-law."

During the song, some one in the lower part of the house let a dog loose.

Two or three people kicked him, and he started down the main aisle yelping with all his might.

"Mad dog! Mad dog!" was the universal shout, and everybody climbed up on the seats.

The house was in a terrible uproar, and men howled till they were black in the face.

The dog stopped for a moment near the orchestre, some one grabbed him by the tail, and slung him on the stage.

This was received with deafening cheers.

"F der show keeps pannin' out like dis every nite, fer fun and money it'll be der boss of der world."

He went back to the stage and found his partner in a towering rage. He was striding up and down, tearing his hair and brandishing his sword.

"I shall challenge the man who let that monster loose on me the first thing in the morning," he exclaimed, fiercely. "I will challenge the whole house to meet me in mortal combat. To offer such an insult to me, Rumford, the Unmashed."

"It was a dog gone shame, dat's fact," said Shorty, seriously. "Does yer tink dey done it pupously?"

"It was the work of a rival, sir—a rival."

"Arrival from where 'bouts?"

"In all my varied experience—"

"What, with dogs?"

"No, sir; with men. Never before did such a thing as that happen to me. But I will be revenged, sir, terribly revenged."

Saying this, he put on his sword, scowled on every body, and then strode off.

Shorty followed on behind to see the fun, managing to keep out of sight, however.

The count threw the door of his room open with a bang, and was about to enter.

He heard a dog's low growl from within, and closed that door instanter.

"Is this more dog?" he asked of himself, "or is it the creation of an over-wrought fancy?"

He tried the door again very gently.

And the dog got right up and went for him.



He growled, barked, snapped his teeth, and tore around the room like mad.

The count was in a dilemma. His street clothes were all in that apartment, under the immediate supervision of the savage canine, and as he was still dressed as the bloody Macbeth he knew not what to do.

Shorty, grinning from ear to ear, stood there watching him.

The unmashed walked up and down several times, scratching his chin, and looking the picture of despair. At length he approached the door and began to talk to the warlike watcher within.

"Poor doggy, nice old boy. Doggy want a bone?" Whether the "poor doggy" regarded this as an insult, or fondly imagined that the count himself was the particular bone referred to, cannot be known, but certain it is that he gave a yelp and threw himself against the door, as if he had determined to come out and have a row with somebody, anyhow.

The unmashed retired hastily, and began to swear. Then Shorty made himself visible.

"What's der trouble?" he asked, innocently. "That dog, sir—that dog, dog, I say!" cried the count. "He is in my room."

"What, is yer took a notion ter him, an' goin' ter keep him fer a pet?"

"Keep him? Sir, he is keeping me—keeping me out of my room!"

"Why, yer isn't 'fraid of a little ting like dat, is yer?" laughed Shorty. "I'll git him out of dere in ter minutes."

He walked up and boldly threw open the door. The dog dove out into the passageway with his eyes ablaze.

He went for the count on sight.

That now thoroughly alarmed individual took to his heels, got out of the theater, and ran up the street, closely followed by the growling cur, which, in turn, was closely followed by Shorty, who kept yelling: "Mad dog, mad dog!" at the top of his voice.

The count had thrown a large cloak over his shoulders, which now swung behind him in the midnight breeze.

The dog got close up to him, made a flying leap, and getting a solid grip on the cloak hung on for dear life.

The excited count unbuckled it at the throat, and down went dog and cloak in the street, while the unmashed, lightened of his burden, quickly disappeared in the darkness.

Shorty, after some difficulty, succeeded in capturing the cloak, and, full of laughter, started for the hotel.

On arriving there he found that the count had not yet turned up, so he sat down and destroyed cigarettes while waiting for his illustrious friend to put in an appearance.

The unmashed didn't get home as quietly as he would have liked to, by any manner of means.

He had hardly got rid of the dog, before he was stopped by an officer.

"Who the deuce are you?" he demanded. "What yer doin' runnin' around in dem kind of clothes fer? Be yer some old warrior dat's bust up outer yer tomb?"

"Unhand me, villain!" cried the count. "By Heaven, sir, attempt to detain me, and me trusty blade shall quickly find thy heart."

He did not draw his "trusty blade."

In fact, he acted as if he expected the "trusty" to leap out of its own accord at the proper moment, and find hearts by the dozen to go for.

"Yer ever pull any rusty blade on me, young feller," sneered the officer, "an' I find it out, I'll give yer a smash over th' helmet, dat'll sicken yer. I think you better go to the lock-up with me, anyhow."

"Guardian of the peace, be careful, sir. Exercise discretion—"

"I'll exercise dis club if yer don't come along."

By this time half a dozen stragglers had gathered around, and they followed the officer and his prisoner till they halted under a gas-lamp.

"Do you know me?—know me—know me?" cried the count, excitedly. "I am Count Rumford, the great unmashed! Unhand me, sir!"

"Why, it's William Henry Macbeth himself!" shouted one of the crowd.

"Let him go! Let him go!"

"Three cheers for the count!"

The cheers were given with a will, and late though it was, many people hearing them, came running down to see what the trouble was.

The count was quickly released, and the crowd insisted on his mounting a stoop and giving them a speech.

Barkis was perfectly willing. Never was the count so happy as when addressing his fellow-men; giving them the benefit of his mighty intellect, and by his magic eloquence holding them spell-bound and causing their souls to mount up from the dead common level, to soar in the bright realms of his playful fancy.

That is the way he put it.

"Fellow citizens," he began.

That was the whole speech. That was all of the "magic eloquence" that the crowd felt able to take in on this particular evening, as each and every man there assembled began to air his own elocutionary powers, mostly all speaking at once.

"Do you wear them clothes altogether?"

"You wouldn't have him wear 'em all out, would yer?"

And then the gang began to bark and howl and whine until one would have thought that a whole beast show had broken loose.

"Stop dem howls!"

"Howl yer jaw!"

"Go on wid yer whines."

"I'll take claret."

"I'll have champagne."

And then they all broke out with "Champagne

Charlie is my name," and came in on the chorus with a will.

The count all this time continued his speech, as though he was dealing out the store of his information to the most quiet and respectful audience in the world.

"Tell us about the Russian war!"

"Run him out!"

"Who's dat 'liverin' zis 'ration?' hiccupped a drunken man.

"Dan'l Webster."

"Socrates!"

"Sock it to 'em heavy!"

"Zer man's drunk," cried the inebriated individual.

"Who's drunk?"

"Zat count."

In another moment the intemperate man was having a lively fight in the middle of the street, and getting decidedly the worst of it.

The crowd deserted the count in a body, and gathering around the fighters, cheered first one and then the other.

Finally, the intoxicated party made a desperate lunge at his opponent, missed him, and, losing his balance, shot down the open mouth of a sewer.

He was fished out with difficulty—and poles—and covered with mud, started for home.

"What day, zis?" he asked, before he left.

"Monday," suggested some one.

"Muddy! Course zit's muddy," he gasped, taking one melancholy glance at his soil-covered garments,

"an' I'll brush fer home."

He tore up the street amidst the jeers of the crowd.

And the count was still pouring out his burning remarks.

"Take a tumble!" advised one.

"A tumbler of gin," bawled another.

"Drop on yerself."

"Cheese it."

"Dry up."

"Bust."

His admirers gathered around the great unmashed, and, crowding him off the stoop, proceeded to escort him towards his hotel.

On the way they secured a couple of drummers who had been to a late drill, and three sunny sons of Italy armed with the demoralizing hand-organ, who had been trying to make a few pennies out of nocturnal rambles who had been wrestling with the elephant.

This impromptu band was placed at the head of the procession, and ordered to play all they knew how.

The count with the most majestic of steps, and one hand thrust in his bosom, marched proudly along with his head aloft, while the drums rattled loudly, every organ played a different tune, and almost every other man sang a different song.

When they arrived at the hotel, nine times nine were given for Count Rumford the great unmashed, and then, as the police were getting uncomfortably thick and demonstrative, the guard of honor dispersed.

"What the deuce is all dis?" asked Shorty, when he met the count, who looked flushed, pleased and excited.

"What is it? What is it?" he answered, rolling his eyes towards heaven. "It is the people! The people! A public reception and demonstration by the leading citizens! Met me in the street, insisted on having one of my magnificent orations. I gave one to them sir; and such an intelligent, enthusiastic, and deeply interested congregation I never before addressed."

"What did dey enthuse on—whiskey?"

"No, sir! In-tel-lect!"

"Inter which?"

"Avaunt, and quit me sight!"

"Well see here, count, der owner of dat dog is bin round here—"

The unmashed gave his manager one withering glance, and without another word stalked off to bed.

"Well," grinned our little hero, shaking his head, "he's der most fly Pete sorter a ol' cove dat pulls breath in dis country. Never tumbles ter nuffin' if its ever such a give away. Ought ter have der kid an' Shanks 'long ter take some of dis in; dey'd enjoy it red-hot—specially der kid, on'y I 'fraid he'd make it ter red-hot altogether fer mer star."

Thinking this he followed the example of his boss tragedian and retired for the night.

Next morning the partners met at breakfast.

"Hello, count," cried Shorty, who as usual was feeling like a lark, "yer doesn't look well ter-day; got a kinder dogged look 'bout yer."

The count gazed at his interrogator savagely, and made a sudden dive for what he supposed was a boiled potato.

It was not, it was an egg.

So fiercely did he go for it that he threw it out of the dish and sent it sailing through the air.

It took a colored waiter square between the eyes, and being soft, spattered all over his face.

"Gorermity!" roared the astonished African.

"Look at der egg-spression on his face," grinned Shorty.

"Who frew dat spiled hen fruit at me?" demanded the waiter, wildly.

"Black man," replied the count, "you are—"

"Don't let him call yer a blac' man," interrupted Shorty. "Holler out, sonny, an' let him see dat yer is a yeller."

"Show me der man what done it, dat's all," and the darkey shut his big fists and evidently meant business.

"Si-i-r-r-r!" cried the count in his deepest tragic accents and at the same time springing up and striking a favorite attitude. "Avaunt, and quit me sight."

Here he drew an imaginary sword, which warlike action so frightened the egg-covered son of Ham (a sort of ham and egg darkey, so to speak) that he bolted off and was seen no more.

The count sat down and seizing a cup of coffee, nod-

ded to Shorty, who was shaking with laughter, and exclaimed:

"Once more has victory perched upon our banners—still are we unmashed!"

He drank down half the contents of the cup at one swallow.

The coffee was red hot and burned so that tears came into his eyes; he half choked for one brief moment, then dropped the cup, and spurted out of his mouth a stream of burning fluid, and a "God bless me."

The cup tumbled in the lap of a fat woman sitting next to him, scalding her hands and soiling her dress, and a little thin man opposite was nearly deluged by the count's untimely burst of eloquence and hot coffee.

The woman screamed and the man swore.

The unmashed looked as serene as a morning in May.

"I remember," he exclaimed, thrusting his hand in his bosom in his usual way, and politely bowing towards the fleshy female, "that almost the identical accident happened at a breakfast given by my esteemed friend, the Duke of Dumplings. His royal highness, Prince Goferswhiski, a man who loved me as a brother, turned to make a remark to Sir Slick Slickerly, when Lord—"

"Oh, Lord, give us a rest," groaned Shorty, who was enjoying the scene immensely.

"Certainly, Mr. Shorty. I'll give you the rest in one moment," and the count turned to his manager with great dignity, and went on with his story: "As I was about to remark, when Lord—"

"Lord help you if I get my hands on you," gasped the fat woman who had been all this time finding her voice, which was not a musical one by any means. "You dried up, conceited fraud! You old lunatic! If my husband was here I'd make him throw you down stairs."

"Tak' care, count," grinned Shorty, "der ol' gal's gettin' histairical."

"Madam," cried the unmashed, waving his hand in the air, and looking up as if "madam" had suddenly gone off in a balloon, "never again, never again interrupt an anecdote when I, Count Rumford, am relating it—an anecdote deeply interesting to the nobility of Europe."

Then, after nodding at Shorty, he exclaimed:

"Let me again resume. He turned to make a remark to Sir Slick Slickerly, when Lord—"

"You shan't lord it over me in this way," cried the little man, who had finally got his face dried. "I'm no lord, I'm a plain lard merchant from Cincinnati."

"Sir," replied the count, folding his arms, and giving the man a withering glance, "you look like it."

"Dat's hogish!" exclaimed Shorty. "Now, little 'un, bristle rite up ter him."

"I demand satisfaction," roared the thin man, who was getting wilder and wilder.

"Pistols and more coffee," suggested Shorty.

"Pardon me," begged the count.

"Yes, little hog merchant," broke in Shorty, "grunt his pardon."

"Never! never! I want blood! blood!"

"He called for the article as if half a dozen barrels of it at least would be necessary to cleanse his wounded honor."

Shorty spoke to a waiter, who went out and quickly returned, bringing with him a tin pail filled with water made red by a little bitters from the bar of the hotel.

Shorty took the pail and waited.

The count was perfectly calm and serene.

"When I fought my now celebrated duel with the great Count de Bounce, I said to my second, the Duke—"

"Blood! blood!" hissed the little man, as if now nothing short of a couple of oceans full would satisfy his thirsty soul. "Blood!"

Shorty walked up to him and held out his pail.

"What's this?" asked he of the thirsty soul.

"What yer axed fer. Blood."

Quite a crowd had gathered by this time, and Shorty, holding out his blood and looking up at the little lard merchant so innocently, caused everybody to laugh loudly.

The howler for gore sneaked away, and Shorty sat his blood on the table.

The count with a benign smile on his face was bowing to Shorty, when the fat woman went for him.

"You may put him down," she yelled, "but you can't me!"

Saying this, she grabbed the pail of blood and threw it at the count with a: "There, take that!"

The unmashed stood like one dumbfounded.

He was covered and dripping with "blood," and looked as if he might be boss of a thousand wounds.

"Madam!" he finally cried, "I cannot challenge yer to mortal combat, but by heavens, it is only your sex which protects you from my just vengeance."

He flounced off up stairs, and Shorty didn't see him again till night.

In the evening the count appeared at the theater looking more important than usual.

"Mr. Shorty," he said to his little manager, "I shall astound the audience to-night."

"Shouldn't wonder, count."

"I feel full of play."

"So does der audience."

"I'll make it warm fer them, sir."

"An' dey'll make it warm for yer ter, I'll bet," grinned Shorty, going around to the box-office.

The people began to arrive early, and long before the curtain went up, hardly an inch of vacant room remained in the house.

The crowd was a jolly one, and from the entrance of the first boy the trouble began.

"Histe dat rag!"

"Give us more music!"

"Turn up der gas!"

"Tree cheers fer der bald-headed man down stairs!"

The man with the vacant lot on his head quickly put



on his hat, at which the galleries cheered lustily and ended up by singing:

"When you ketch er black cat,  
Shave him, shave him."

The count was received in the usual enthusiastic manner, and bowed lowly to his admirers many times. Before he open his mouth to speak, someone threw a small bouquet at him.

"Go fer it, William Henry!"

"Grab it!"

"Scoop it in!"

And then the whole house shouted in chorus:

"Pick it up! Pick it up! Pick it up!"

Still bowing as only a count can, the unmashed advanced and stooped to grasp it, when lo! it gracefully slid away.

There was a string attached to it.

"Never mind, count, I'll send yer round er cabbage!"

"Dat ain't flowers, Bummy, it's taffy!"

Then somebody blew a blast on a tin horn, and in two minutes, three hundred fellow horns came forth, and such a frightful tooting as went up was enough to awaken the dead.

And from this out the play went on in the dumbest kind of dumb show.

Towards the close of the play, a party of men forced their way down the middle aisle.

They were all well-known politicians, and were received with cheer after cheer.

Two of them carried an immense and very handsome basket of fruits and flowers.

They pushed their way along, and halted just in front of the stage.

The play stopped immediately, but the noise went right on.

"Give us er rose, count!"

"Chuck us up an apple, will yer?"

"Give me de core, mister!"

"No; give him der chorus!"

And then they sang, "All Among the Hay."

The count, highly pleased at the prospect of receiving so beautiful a present, strode down to the footlights with his most lordly air and beaming smile.

The donors made a few remarks to which the unmashed replied, though no one heard a word that was uttered.

Then the basket was passed up, while the people yelled themselves hoarse.

Even while the gratified count was still bowing his thanks, and gazing at the audience, the contents of that basket began to move in a most mysterious manner.

Suddenly it exploded with a rat! tat! tat! bang!

"I never did; dat's certain," answered Shorty, sincerely.

"And how I swayed the vast audience and roused them to the very pitch of enthusiasm!"

"They did pitch in, dat's fact."

"And the applause!"

"Yes, count, dey is vigorous wid dere applause. What makes 'em laff at yer?"

"Laugh at me—at me—at me! Sir, it is the groundlings. They do *not* laugh at laugh at me! They laugh at Shakespeare."

"I didn't see him dere."

At this the count fidgetted about in his chair a few moments, and then arose with a clouded brow.

He paced up and down the room, muttering beneath his breath: "Idiots all! Ignorant, unlettered dunces! Scoffers!" and then suddenly turning fiercely on the calm and cool Shorty, he exclaimed:

"Sir, did you never hear of the bard of Avon?"

"What was he barred for? Didn't he play a square game?"

"The bard of Avon! I repeat it, sir!"

"Oh, he was a repeater, was he?"

At this the unmashed was boiling, but by a great effort he suppressed his wrath.

"Mr. Shorty," he said, "I ask you a simple question. Did you or did you not ever hear of Shakespeare, the immortal bard of Avon?"



Shorty, unnoticed, pulled the faucet and a stream of beer came rushing forth, taking the unmashed square in the breast.

In vain the count gesticulated and shouted; all refused to listen to him.

One fellow, with lungs like a bull, kept yelling every few moments:

"Louder! Louder!"

"Stand on yer head!" cried another.

"How's yer mudder?"

"Give us a good policy number, count!"

"Why don't yer git dat paper collar washed?"

Just here some festive chap slung a handful of beans at the unmashed, and in no time at all the stage was fairly white with them.

"There's yer beans, mister!"

"Somebody chuck him a chunk of pork!"

"He won't eat a feller hog!"

"Root, hog, or die!"

"Another plate of beans dis way!"

This was followed by such a shower of the Yankees' favorite vegetable, that the count, for a moment, was driven from the stage.

A supe vainly tried to sweep some of them away.

And then the gods began:

"Supel! Supel!"

"Bean soup!"

"Dis must be der count's deaneft night!"

Then everybody began to sing:

"Beans, beans, beautiful beans,  
Beans is what makes a man feel so peculiar."

It made no difference whether the curtain was down or up, the infernal racket still went on.

It was loaded with three or four packs of fire-crackers, which had been ignited at the last moment. Fruits and flowers flew in every direction, while the demoralized count dropped the basket, and rushed from the stage.

That ended the performance for the night, although it was half an hour before the last of the jolly audience got out of the theater.

#### CHAPTER IV.

THE count was not at all pleased with his loaded bouquet.

He felt insulted; and it made him morose and gloomy.

"To think that such an insult should be offered to me, Count Rumford the Unmashed!" he exclaimed to Shorty.

"Well," replied the irrepressible manager, "I isn't much 'quainted wid flowers merself, but I's read 'bout where der roses an' der lilies blow, so I s'poses dat dey is liable ter blow up any time."

"And throwing a nosegay—"

"You got a gay nose for dem tings, ain't yer?"

"I say throwing a nosegay to me and then jerking it back with a string is stupid—stupid!"

"Dat's what I tort when yer stoop-ed ter pick it up."

"And I was never acting better. Did you ever see such a sublime performance? Did you ever see anything like it, sir?"

"What did he have on when yer seen him last?"

"Oh, Shakespeare! Shakespeare!" murmured the count, wringing his hands.

"How much does yer owe Shakespeare?"

The unmashed never said another word, but buttoning up his coat he left the room, looking as if now he was prepared to go down to the silent tomb and help hold up a big monument.

Shorty had a quiet grin after his boss tragedian had gone, and then went about making preparations for quitting the city.

Baltimore was the next place the count was to appear in, and from all that could be learned he was sure of a hearty welcome and a very warm time indeed.

It was so long before the noble Rumford turned up that Shorty got worried and started out to hunt for him.

After a long search he found him in a little dive in Shipton street.

The great unmashed was surrounded by some twenty common-looking people to whom he was delivering a learned lecture on capital, labor and the count.

The crowd was evidently divided in its opinion; a few regarding the orator as an escaped lunatic, and others looking upon him as some leading man in the councils of the nation.

The count was in his glory, and felt as proud as if he was addressing a congress of statesmen.

Shorty kept out of sight and listened.

"Why, my fellow citizens" cried the unmashed,



waving aloft his half emptied glass of beer, "gaze upon me. I am a laborer. Millions have tried to keep me down, to grind me beneath their heels, to crush me, but I am still unmashed."

Here a brawny-fisted son of toil ordered a fresh beer for the speaker, which he accepted with a dignified bow, drank, and then continued:

"Capital is oppressive. It is the tyrant that rules with a golden rod harder than iron. It is a stone about the neck of enterprise that drags it down and keeps it under. Let us cut the rope, break the grindstone, tear off our chains of slavery and be men. We will have no more capital! Cast it to the dogs. Throw away the greenback. Destroy the vile sham, and bury the gold from sight forever."

"Dot last round vas sixty schents," broke in the saloon keeper, with an anxious look as if he was afraid the "tearing up" might begin on the spot, making him the first martyr.

It was paid, a new round ordered, and the count, now worked up to fever heat, went on:

"I myself am indifferent honest, owing to my fellow-men some several hundreds of dollars. But, ah, my heavens, willingly, most willingly would I nobly sacrifice my debts, see them wiped out forever by the hand of destiny, could it bring one moment's joy to my fellow-laborers."

This unselfish sentiment was received with loud cheers, and more beer.

The count stood directly in front of a freshly-tapped keg of lager.

While he was "orating," Shorty quietly and all unseen succeeded in loosening the faucet so that he had to lean his back against it to keep it in its place.

The count, who by this time was in that rosy condition when the tongue gets thick and the head grows light, once more resumed:

"Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

"Labor is the real capital; money a sham! Down with money!"

"Yes, eighty schents down mid dot last round," interrupted the landlord.

"Down on the slate with it then!" roared the excited count. "I say fellow-laborers, cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war."

At this moment, Shorty pulled out the faucet.

A noble stream of beer at once came rushing forth, taking the unmashed square in the bosom and washing him off his feet.

Shorty at once slipped off behind a table, the Dutchman tried to stop the flow of lager, and the crowd gathered around the dripping count who was like "Niobe, all beer," and helped him to his feet.

He looked like a drowned rat; his eloquence was all gone, and he seemed quite chop-fallen.

Folding his arms across his soaked breast, and casting a withering glance at his late enthusiastic admirers, he exclaimed:

"Tis but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous."

Saying this, he stepped out of a puddle of beer, and sat down in a chair, on which, only a moment previous, Shorty had put a bent pin.

"Gorrelmighty!" cried the count, suddenly springing up and overturning a table. "Like Cæsar, I am stabbed in the back!"

That portion of the crowd who had regarded the valiant Rumford as a howling lunatic, tapped their foreheads significantly and said:

"I told you so."

"Probably escaped from an asylum," suggested one.

"Or a jail," put in another.

"He ought to be watched."

"Call an officer."

Before anybody could start on this charitable mission, Shorty made himself visible, and speaking to one of the noisiest of the gang, asked:

"Doesn't yer know dis gemmen?"

"No; who is he?" was the general cry.

"Why, dat's Count Rumford, der greatest tragedian in der hull world."

"Is that him?"

"Fshaw! is he only an actor chap?"

"Why, I thought he was a senator, at least."

"So did I," they all cried, looking up very much disgusted.

"A senator!" exclaimed Shorty; "don't yer make ner mistake. Why, dat man could have bin der president if he wanted ter,"—and then he added to himself, "of a debatin' society."

The count had paid no attention to this conversation, being too busily engaged extracting himself from that pin.

When he did look up and see his jocund manager, he forgot his troubles immediately, and came forward smilingly and shook him by the hand.

"My dear Mr. Shorty," he exclaimed; "I am delighted to see you in this headquarters of brain, sir."

"Bout quarter a brain ter a head," laughed the party addressed.

"Come and sit down. Landlord! tankards for myself and friend."

They seated themselves at a table, the count very carefully dusting off his chair before trusting his noble person on it, and began to talk, while the crowd one by one passed out.

"My dear friend," began the count, "I wish you had been here. Such a sight."

"Of what? beer?"

"Don't interrupt. I have been making a brilliant speech to the working classes. Brilliant! brilliant! sir. The audience might have been larger—"

"Jist ser. It might bin lager."

"But they were appreciative men—men of brains."

"An' much thirst."

"And," continued the count, holding up his glass of

beer, "I gave them the froth of my argument. You, Mr. Shorty, shall have the body."

"Is he dead?"

"Dead! Who dead?"

"Why, argument."

The count drank his beer in silence, stared at his companion a moment, and then continued:

"Money is truly the root of all evil."

"Well, yer take der evil an' I'll collar der root," exclaimed the amused Shorty.

"It is a demoralizer," continued the count, earnestly.

"Where kin I find her?"

"Who, sir?"

"Moral 'Liza."

"I say it is—it is a destroyer of man's happiness—a curse! a false god!"

At this moment the landlord came up and said:

"Blease bay der peer vonst, blease."

The count began to go through his pockets, all the while keeping up the conversation.

"Money is dross! When did filthy gold ever purchase an hour's happiness for me? for me! Nevah! I despise money! I do not want it!" Here he stopped his search, and gazing at his friend in the blandest sort of way, said:

"Ah, eh. Just let me have twenty dollars. I am a little short to-day."

"Dere yer is," grinned Shorty, shoving over the cash. "Dat upsets der argument, an' now I tinks we'd better have nudder beer."

The count gave the landlord a five dollar bill, out of which he took ten cents, and handed back the change.

"Is all paid for?" asked the unmashed, grandiloquently, as if the score had been several thousands at least.

"Yas. Does mans vat you speak mid settle for everytings."

In a small way it was the old story over again. The agitator had had a good time and all he wanted, and the workingmen had paid for it.

"What makes yer so damp?" asked Shorty, pretending to notice the count's moist condition for the first time.

"Sir," said the noble tragedian, in his most impressive manner, "I met with a terrible accident. Perhaps it was an accident, and perhaps"—here he lowered his voice to a tragic whisper and leaned forward—"perhaps it was the fiendish work of a rival! A rival, sir, that ever dogs my footsteps!"

"Yer doesn't tol' mer ser!" exclaimed Shorty, as if greatly alarmed, though he had heard of this imaginary rival some hundreds of times already.

"As I was addressing my hearers, the beer barrel suddenly exploded with a crash that shook the entire building. 'An earthquake!' cried all, with pallid lips. The faucet struck me in my manly breast, and had my chest not been one of iron it must have gone through me."

"Why didn't yer take dat faucet an' force it down yer rival's throat?"

"The blow knocked me down, but I was calm and collected."

"Collected up off der floor?"

"I account for my wet condition by supposing that for a moment I fainted, and my friends threw water on me to revive me. I was still unmashed!"

"Well," mused Shorty, regarding the speaker with admiration, "der ol' snoozer kin give Truth ten pints in a game an' beat her out every time."

A stranger came up to them.

His voice was thin and weak, his eyes bright and staring, his cheeks hollow and his form emaciated.

His clothes seemed to hold together only from sheer force of habit, and he trembled with weakness.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I am not a professional beggar, but God knows I must have something! I am starving! I have a wife and little one at home, and Poverty is our only companion. Gentlemen, help me—help them. I am willing to work for you, to slave for you—to do anything! only help me. Heaven knows it is hard to have to ask for charity, but I cannot see my wife and child dying before my very eyes."

It was evidently a case of genuine want, and Shorty, with a tear trickling down that cheek that only knew tears of laughter, thrust a bill in the poor man's hand, without trusting himself to speak.

A look of gratitude lit up the unfortunate's face that amply repaid our hero for his well-timed gift.

He tried to stop Shorty, but the Count stopped him.

"You are poor," he said.

"Yes, poor."

"Star-r-r-ving!"

"Yes, starving!"

"Mr. Shorty," cried the count, turning to his manager, "a living illustration of my argument. This man has been ground beneath the heel of capital! Unlike me he has allowed himself to be mashed! If there was no money in the world he would be as rich as I! But never mind."

He turned about to the trembling man.

"Sir," he exclaimed, "I sympathize with you. I, Count Rumford—never, never forget that name!—I will aid you."

The unmashed brought out a small volume that looked very much like a cheque book, and calling for pen and ink, proceeded to write.

"There," he said, when he had finished, handing the paper to the man, "Heaven bless you and yours. Go, go!"

The man clutched the precious paper tightly, and after returning thanks as best he could, took his departure.

With golden visions floating through his brain—visions of a new start in life and happiness to come, he carefully unfolded the count's gift and looked at it.

It was an order for two seats in the Holiday Street Theater to see the great unmashed play "Romeo."

An hour after this Shorty and the count were whirling on their way to Baltimore.

All through the journey Rumford was full of chin and anecdote, among other things giving vivid descriptions of several bloody duels he had fought with noblemen in Europe.

Shorty nodded him till his eyes grew heavy, and then dropped off asleep, a circumstance that apparently made no difference to the count, whatever, as he continued talking right along.

Every preparation had been made by the bloods of the town to give the great unmashed a first-class reception.

The theater was packed.

In the gallery, at least in the front seats, not a man's face was to be seen; but lower limbs, encased in dirty top boots and rusty shoes, were hung over all the way around.

When the count, dressed as the love sick Romeo, first appeared, he was received with a prolonged roar, and upstairs, the owners of the top boots and rusty shoes, waved him a hearty welcome with their legs.

And then the troubles of the evening began.

The greatest living tragedian was, as usual, all smiles and bows, but before he could speak his opening lines, people began throwing so many small five cent bouquets at him that he became partly demoralized.

They came at him in showers, and it seemed as if nine out of ten of them struck him somewhere about the head.

One hit him square in the mouth as he was about to speak, which caused him to splutter and spit in a most ridiculous manner.

"Pick 'im up, count!" was the cry.

"Pick 'im all up!"

"Is yer fond of der little flower?" bawled someone in the upper gallery, "den take dis!"

And down came a bag of flour, striking Romeo on the head and making him in a moment as white as a ghost.

And then the audience yelled like so many demons. This was the worst the count had got yet, and it set him boiling with rage.

He shook his fist and roared defiance at the whole house, but not a word he uttered could be heard three feet away from him.

"That was an ill bread act," cried one.

"You knead brushing, count!"

"Dough go brush yourself, dough!"

"Tak' a bath!"

"Take a swim!"

"Git made inter a loaf of bread an' eat yourself!"

"Der flour takes der cake."

The din was so great, and the stage in such a disordered condition, that the count was forced to retire, and the curtain was rung down on act one.

The second act was a crusher.

The audience, if anything, grew more noisy than ever, and about the only line that was distinctly heard, was Romeo's opening in the garden.

"He jests at scars that never felt a wound—  
But soft! what light—"

At this moment, a big tomato, hurled with unerring aim, struck the count in the breast, and splattered him from head to foot.

"Now yer is scarred!"

"Now yer kin jest!"

"Jest so!"

"Oh, pipe Juliet on der balcony!"

"Ain't she er buster!"

And so she was. An ambitious amateur that Shorty had picked up in Philadelphia and brought on with him. She weighed two hundred at least, and had about as much idea of acting as a dog has of digging a well.

"Go fer her, count!"

"Chuck her a kiss!"

"Take her out and buy her a piece of pie!"

"Say, sis, lower him down er kiss on er string!"

"Ye'll want er couple er barrels er pizen ter have any effect on you, ol' gal."

The count went on with the scene in dumb show.

Every time the "hefty" Juliet would open her mouth to speak, she would make a little rush to the edge of the balcony and lean away over.

"Tak' care William Henry Rumford, she's goin' fer yer!"

"If she drops on yer yer is a goner!"

"Fasten her wid a chain!"

"Put a muzzle on her!"

"Yes, er muslin dress!"

Juliet, the bulky, made her usual rush to say to her sighing swain,

"O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon," when the balcony suddenly gave way and came down with a crash.

The count bounded away just in time, and Juliet rolled over and over in a very undignified manner.

Such a shout as went up at this, was never before heard within the walls of a theater.

"Down goes yer apple-cart!"

"Pick her up, count—pick her up!"

"Send fer a derrick!"

"Git a broom and sweep her up!"

But the fair Juliet, mad as a March hare, picked herself up and marched off the stage. This ended that act. The balance of the play was only pantomime.

People wandered on and wandered off, while the audience, full of glee and noise, guyed one and all, shouted, whistled, mewed like cats, sang songs, and laughed.

By the time that the last scene of the last act came on the count was thoroughly disgusted, and the fat Juliet was steaming over with rage.

The fair Capulet lay in her tomb.

Paris, "Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris," came with torch and flowers, and after saying his lines, which nobody listened to, retired.

Then strode on the count to break open the tomb, and die beside his loved Juliet.

Shorty, in looking around among the "props" in



the afternoon, had found an old trick crowbar, such as is sometimes used in pantomimes.

When you strike the point of it against anything the lower part telescopes into the upper, leaving it just half its original length.

The count, who was anxious to get the play over, rushed to the tomb with this crowbar in his hand, and struck the door a heavy blow.

The crowbar immediately shut up, which the unlooked-for action on its part caused the excited Romeo to tumble against the door with all his might.

It was only canvas, and the great unmashed went sailing clear through it, spilling over Juliet and landing on his head.

Juliet, who had been mad ever since the balcony had fallen down, was not a woman to be trifled with.

"You old fool! You unmannerly brute, you! I'll show you! I'll show you!"

And she went for the count like a tigress.

She tore his clothes, scratched his face, and striking straight out from the shoulder, knocked him off his pins.

A quick curtain put an end to the row, and the howling audience, who kept demanding: "More! More!" were finally, after much trouble, got out of the house.

"Who, I ask you, sir, *who* was the diabolical villain that hu-r-ried upon me a bag of meal?"

"Some baggage-smasher, I guess."

"Why was I thus insulted?"

"Maybe dey done it ter make yer voice more meal-odious."

"I am aware, Mr. Shorty, that my appearance on the stage ever creates the wildest enthusiasm—*enthusiasm*, sir! That is because I am a great actor. I carry the audience with me; and if some make merry—"

"Carry der news ter Mary."

"Why, sir, I am like a painting executed by one of the old masters—"

"I know dat paintin's is allers *hung* but I didn't, know dat yer had ever bin *executed*," said Shorty solemnly.

The count twitched his face at this, which made the plaster bob up and down like jumping Jacks.

And set Shorty laughing in spite of himself.

"Why do you laugh?" demanded the count, indignantly.

"Cause yer puts mer in mind of Paris in der play las' nite."

"What, the noble County Paris?"

"Yes, plaster of Paris, ser."

The great unmashed was very angry at this allusion to his wounds, and with a scowl on his brow he folded his arms across his breast and intently regarded a

He was in a first-class humor and when he saw his partner he immediately invited him to partake.

To be mad one moment and in a good humor the next was a peculiarity of the great tragedian. Anger, with him, was like water on a duck's back. One shake and it was gone.

"I was just telling our friend here," began the count, "of my interview with the queen."

"Did she tell yer ter git out of her way?" asked Shorty, winking at "our friend."

"No, sir. She gazed upon me and sighed—"

"Which side?"

This disgusted the count, and he paid a hurried visit to the cracker bowl on the end of the bar.

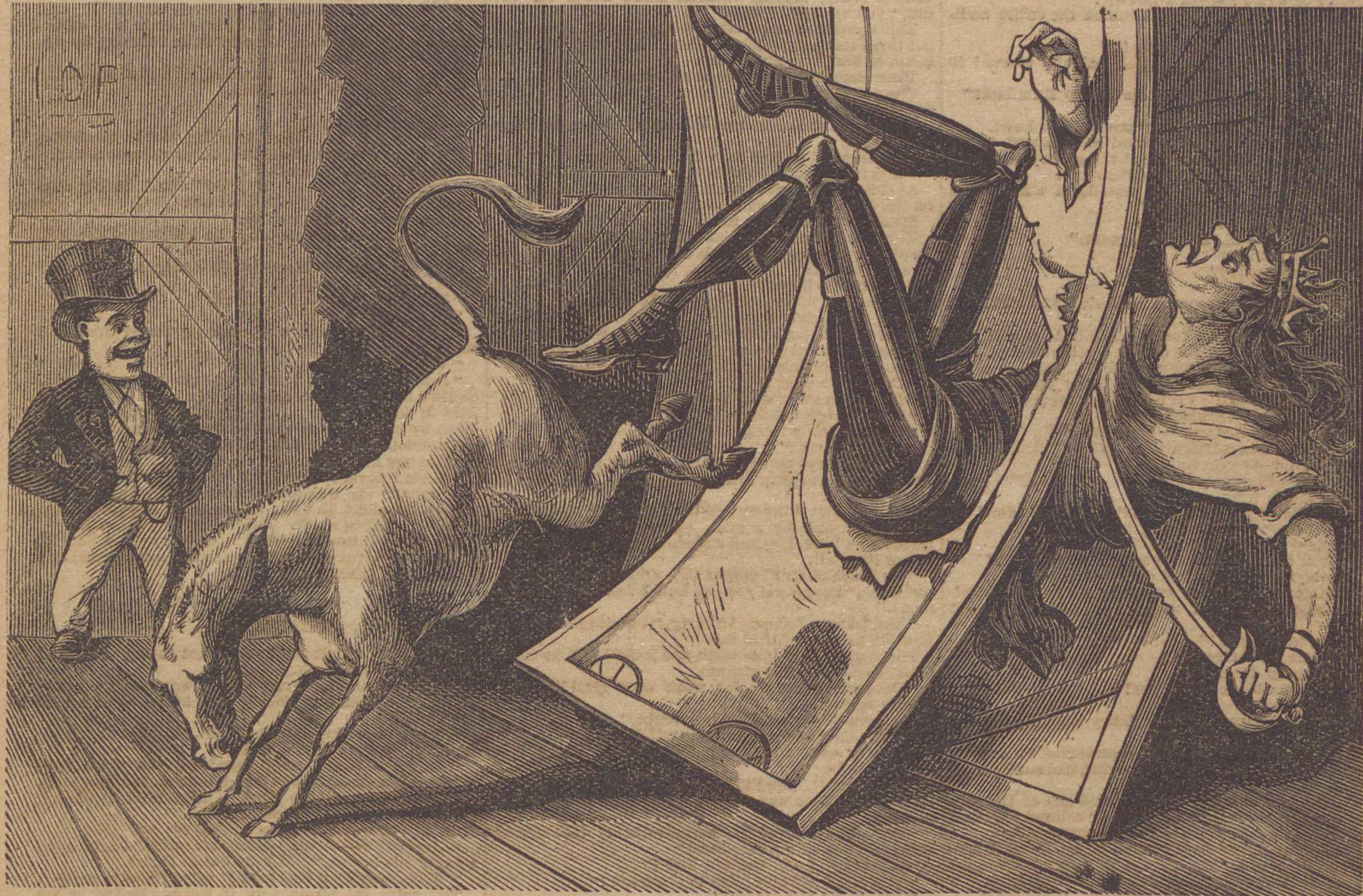
"I think we'd better have some apple-jack after dat," grinned Shorty, "den we kin take der count's queen in."

The unmashed mumbled some reply, but his mouth was so full of cracker that it was unintelligible.

"Dat's rite, count, allers *cracker* joke when yer gits a chance," exclaimed our ever ready hero, "but 'stead of stuffin' yerself wid dem tings yid better stuff dat wardrobe of yours in yer trunk, 'cause we must git up an' amble out of dis in jist half an hour."

The noble Rumford at once started off to pack up, Shorty settled the bill, and soon they were on the way to Washington.

The city of magnificent distances had been thorough



The Unmashed went sailing into the air, tore through a solid castle wall, painted on a flat, and landed on his hands and knees.

#### CHAPTER V.

WHEN the count turned up next morning, his face looked like a war map and he had one funeral eye.

He ate his breakfast in silence, keeping his good optic steadily fixed on his plate.

The meal over, he retired to his own room, where Shorty found him trying to get rid of the marks inflicted on him by the fair and gentle Juliet.

"Yer come rite up ter der *scratch* nobly las' nite, count," remarked our hero, with a grin.

"Sir," said the great tragedian, dexterously clapping on a long plaster, "he who lays his hand upon a woman, save in the way of kindness is a cowar-rd! I could have crushed the wild female with *one* look! But I said to myself, remember, valiant Count Rumford, the eyes of the whole wor-ld are on you! Be not rash—"

"Yer mug looks as if it had had der rash."

"My strong will conquered."

"I tort der woman conquered."

"I said again to myself, how will it look—"

"Looks as if yer'd had a rash of finger nails ter der head."

"Peace, babbling man."

"Yes, she *did* give yer a piece of her mind, didn't she?"

"I hope yer have discharged her."

"She went off like a gun an' never kicked once."

"Gone! Then I am *still* unmashed."

"Dat was a bully house we had las' nite, count."

cracked shaving cup as if he had a great mind to challenge it to mortal combat on the spot.

"I'd lather yer wouldn't go fer der cup," grinned the irrepressible Shorty.

"Sir-r-r!" cried Rumford, fiercely.

"I soap-pose so," roared Shorty.

"This is no laughing matter."

"I know it: it's a shavin' cup."

What with his experience of the night before, his sore and scarred countenance, and his manager's guying, the count was very much put out.

He bounced up and strode backward and forward across the floor until he stubbed his toe against a heavy table and then with a "dammit!" he sat down.

The latter accident didn't tend to soothe his temper a bit. He turned to Shorty.

"Sir," he cried, his eyes flashing fire, somewhat tempered by plaster, "dirt! I repeat it, sir, *dirt!* belongs in the gutter!"

"Well, den, what is *you* doin' up here?" quietly asked the unruffled Shorty.

At this retort Rumford again bounced up, grabbed his hat, and made a bee line for the bar-room, where he soothed his wounded feelings with numerous cocktails, all charged in Shorty's bill.

In half an hour our hero went down and found the unmashed telling the barkeeper about an interview he had once had with the queen of England, and giving him to understand, by various nods, sighs, and winks, that he had not left the royal dame heart-free by a long shot.

ly billed, and portraits of the great unmashed beamed from every window.

He was well known in the capitol, and the inhabitants had determined to give him a glorious reception.

He was to appear for one night only at the National, in Shakespeare's great historical play of Richard Third.

After a hearty meal Shorty and the count strolled down to the show shop, the former to look after the receipts and the latter to dress and make ready for the evening's labors.

Luck continued with them, for long before the curtain went up the house was crammed.

Boys of the period, bummers, department clerks, politicians, office seekers, men about town, and solid merchants were all represented in force, while members of Congress took back seats, and over-staid and steady senators hid themselves in private boxes to enjoy the sport.

The first music was listened to in comparative silence, but when the prompter rang his bell and the green cloth slowly rolled up, the audience broke out in a prolonged roar.

The count was delighted. He recognized many of the notables present, and was certain that he had not performed before so distinguished a collection of people for many a day.

As the "bloody and devouring bore," he went decidedly lame, and wore on his back an enormous hump. With the air of a true aristocrat he advanced and bowed deeply.

Then folding his arms and drawing his brow down



is if he had determined in future to let it find a resting place on his nose, he began:

"Now is the winter of our discontent—"

"Tain't winter, count, it's spring!" roared someone.

This started the racket, and from that time forward the noble unmashed had little show to be heard.

"What makes him limp?"

"He's got a corn!"

"How did he corn-tract it?"

"He's foundered!"

"What? On a rock?"

"Rock him ter sleep wid er club!"

"Pipe der hump on his back!"

"That's where he carries his wardrobe!"

"No, it must be a wart!"

"It's er bunion from wearing tight shirts!"

"He's a camel!"

"That's th' reason one drink of water lasts him so long!"

And then they started up "Johnny fill up the bowl!"

All this time the count went on with his part as if he was being listened to with the most respectful attention.

"What's he talkin' about?"

"He's tellin' er ghost story!"

"Louder, William Henry!"

"Don't be afraid; speak right up!"

And then for two or three minutes the entire audience shouted in chorus:

"Louder! Louder!! Louder!!!"

"He louder a shillin' a week an' she starved to death!"

"Who, his wife? Oh! William Henry Rumford!"

"No; his cat!"

And then the boys began to "meow" and howl.

This made the count mad and he advanced to the footlights, and shaking his fist at the gallery gods said something that no one could understand.

"Shut up, count," cried a man down stairs, "we can't hear what the boys say."

This brought down the house.

"Don't be mashed, Rumford, go on."

"Louder! louder!"

"Git er telephone!"

"Telephone-y story!"

At this the great unmashed scowled, and strode off the stage.

The scene changed, and on came Lady Anne and half a dozen supers bearing the corpse of King Henry.

"Hello, Annie, how's yer mudder?"

"What did der ol' man croak wid, jim jams?"

"Don't cry, ole gall; I'll be a farder ter yer."

"When yer goin' ter plant him?"

"Is he der ony deadhead in der theater?"

Lady Anne was particularly a silent grief. Not a word she uttered could be heard.

Then enters Gloster.

"Here comes limpey."

"Annie, don't you have nothin' to do with him, he's er b-a-a-d man."

"He plays keno!"

"He won't get up mornin's an' make the fires!"

"He stays out nights and drinks beer!"

Nothing of the dialogue was heard till Gloster handed the angry Anne his sword, and laid his breast open.

"Go for him, Anne!"

"Stab him ter der heart!"

"Kick him in der ribs!"

"Mash him with er rollin' pin!"

"Set on him!"

Just here the corpse of King Henry moved perceptibly.

The dead monarch is usually represented by a dummy; but Shorty, always up to a racket, had substituted a live darkey.

He had done more. He had sawed one of the legs of the bier almost off, knowing if the "colored pussen" moved, down would come the whole arrangement.

Before going on he had covered King Henry's face over tightly with a cloth, and the poor man had moved when he did because he was almost smothered.

"Oh, William Henry, pipe the body, it moved."

"He ain't dead yet!"

"Stab him over again!"

"Kill him some more!"

"Don't fool us dat way; knock his brains out wid an axe!"

"Scalp him!"

King Henry gave another nervous hitch; the half sawed through leg suddenly gave way, and out rolled a stalwart coon.

And then people fairly yelled.

"It's Othello!"

"It's Sam Brown from the Arlington!"

"Say something, Sam."

"Speech! speech! speech!" howled all hands.

The poor darkey was thoroughly frightened, and he bolted off the stage amidst cheers, jeers and laughter.

This ended that act, and while the audience amused themselves by whistling, cat-calling, and singing the "Sweet By-and-bye," the count raised Cain behind the scenes.

He raved at the actors, damned the manager, and cursed the nigger.

Shorty finally appeased him by promising to find out the author of the joke and have him arrested.

The curtain went up on the succeeding acts, but for all that could be heard or understood, it might as well have remained down.

The audience was wild, and would listen to nothing but themselves.

When King Richard's troops came marching on they all shouted.

"Left—left—left! Now you've got it! darn you, keep it. Left—left—left! Now, yer blamed fool, you've lost it!"

"Reduce the army!"

"Take out that fourth man and make an awkward squad of him!"

"How much bounty did yer git?"

"On to Richmond!"

And when Richmond's army appeared they all broke out with:

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching.  
Cheer up, comrades, they will come,"

and never let up until they had finished the song.

Then some chap up stairs, with a stentorian voice, began to make a burlesque speech on all sorts of political subjects, and as he imitated popular congressmen very cleverly, everybody turned their backs to the count and listened to him.

Even he, evidently one of the gang, was continually interrupted.

"I moves der previous question."

"Mr. Speaker! Mr. Speaker!"

"Lay him on the table!"

"Put him under the table!"

"I move that we does now adjine!"

"Vote! vote! vote!"

"Call for der yeas and nays!"

"No neigs here. We ain't horses."

"No!" thundered the thoroughly enraged count in clarion tones, making himself heard above all the din, "you are asses! asses!"

This squelched the orator, and the proud unmashed got three times three for his sally. But they wouldn't listen to him even after this.

Then came the last scene of all—the battle-field.

The count in this was immense, always working himself up to a perfect frenzy.

And this is the scene that Shorty had been patiently waiting for.

King Richard rushed on, wildly shouting:

"A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!"

At this very moment there came calmly walking in on the stage an old sedate army mule.

Shorty had hired him for this occasion only.

The count turned and gazed at the animal as if he were an apparition, and, in his excitement and surprise, he again bawled:

"A horse! a horse!"

The ancient mule looked upon the unmashed with a pitying eye, slowly waved his left ear, and then, opening his mouth, began a long "oh-w-w-w-w-ah-ya."

Such a shout as no living thing but a mule can give.

The audience was in convulsions.

"Count, it's your long-lost brother."

"He's got a strawberry mark on his left leg!"

"Which one is the mule?"

"What a family resemblance!"

"Mashed again!"

The mule kept up his terrible braying, and the noble Rumford, thoroughly demoralized, got off the stage as best he could.

The roar that went up when the curtain descended could be heard for a mile, and Shorty, behind his tragedian's back, laughed and shouted as loud as any one of them all.

"By heavens, sir!" gasped the count, running across our hero, "imagine if you can how I feel at this moment."

"Yes, I know," grinned Shorty, "but din jist 'magine' how der mule must feel too."

The count ground his teeth and looked as if he could chew a scene up in a minute.

"Does yer tink dis is der work of a rival?" asked Shorty seriously.

"Beyond the possibility of a doubt."

"Well, dis ain't der rival himself, is it?"

"Ass!" roared the enraged unmashed, as mad as mad could be.

"Ner, a mule," laughed Shorty. "Still he might be an ass, ter. Dere was a reglar mule-titude of 'em in der house."

"Oh! If I but had the perpetrator of this scurvy trick before me for a moment!"

"What would you der wid him?"

"Kill him! kill him! the vile wretch!"

"Dat would be vile-lent."

"His life would not be worth a moment's purchase!" cried the count, tearing up and down the stage, and keeping a stern eye on the mule, who still stood there, and was now seemingly about half asleep.

Suddenly the fiery Rumford drew his sword, and started for the long-eared animal that had ruined the evening's performance.

"Tis you! 'tis you!" he shouted, brandishing his bright blade. "Revenge! Re—"

This is as far as he got.

That mule woke up all at once, and wheeling around sent his hind legs out on an exploring expedition.

They found the count—found him just under the coat-tails, and raised him.

The unmashed went sailing into the air, tore through a solid castle wall, painted on a flat, and landed on his hands and knees.

"I'm stabbed!" he cried; "stabbed! Help! help!"

The old man was assisted to his dressing-room, and Shorty, full of laughter, quitted the theater.

"Got der great unmashed rite on his ear, bad," he grinned to himself, "an' I'll give him nudder racket fer he gits ter bed ter-nite dat'll sicken him. Got it all laid out fer him red-hot."

The count had talked so much about his bravery, and told so many remarkable yarns about desperate duels in which he had been engaged and always came off first best, that Shorty had resolved to put him to the test.

In order to do this he had provided himself with an old property pistol from the theater, and loaded it up to the muzzle with powder only.

Armed with this, and a handful of loose bird-shot, which he carried in his pocket, he determined to way-

lay his boasting partner, and see what sort of metal he was made of.

In returning to the hotel Shorty knew the count would pass through a little park near the center of which grew a thick clump of bushes.

He concealed himself in this shrubbery and waited.

"Bet he ain't rar gamer den a barn-yard duck," laughed Shorty, "an' 'f' doesn't scare him good it'll ber 'cause I don't know him 's good as I tink I does."

He had not long to wait.

Very soon he espied the tall form of the count approaching.

It was just sufficiently light to recognize him, and that was all.

The unmashed seemed to have recovered his good humor, and he came striding along, swinging his arms like a windmill, and humming a lively air.

Shorty silently brought out his old pistol, cocked it, and held it in his left hand.

In his right he gathered up all the loose bird shot he could hold.

The count had got past him some ten feet or so, when Shorty pointed the pistol straight up in the air, and pulled the trigger.

It made a report like a small cannon.

Then he hurled the bird shot straight at the valiant Rumford's face with all his might.

The count halted, staggered for a moment, and then dropped to the ground as if dead.

Shorty got out of the way as lively as possible, and didn't go near his friend till he saw one or two others hurry to his assistance, when he came running up apparently very much alarmed.

"What's der matter?" he asked, all out of breath.

"Man shot," was the answer.

"Who is he?"

"Dunno, stranger."

"Why," cried our hero, kneeling beside the body, "it's th' noble Count Rumford, th' great unmashed!"

Here the count groaned.

"Don't yer know me, ol' boy?" asked Shorty anxiously. "Look up an' speak ter me."

The unmashed didn't move.

"I shall never speak again," he hoarsely whispered, "I am dead."

This almost made Shorty laugh outright.

"Who done der awful deed?"

"My rival!" groaned Rumford.

"Where is yer hit?"

"Twenty bullets have pierced my manly breast. I am one vast clot of gor-r-r-el!"

"What kin I do fer yer, count?"

"Nothing. I feel that my hours are numbered. Could I have met mine adversary in a fair fight on the field of honor I could die content, but to be struck down by the cowardly hand of an assassin! Oh, it is too much! Still it is the fate of great men."

"But yer might git well, yer know."

"Never! never! To-morrow ten millions of people will mourn the unhappy fate of the great and good Count Rumford, and the principal courts of Europe will be draped in black. Farewell."

This was all the unmashed would say; and Shorty, shaking with quiet laughter, procured a coach and had the old man taken home.

## CHAPTER VI.

In our last we left the noble count being conveyed to his hotel in a coach.

He did nothing but groan all the way, and on arriving at his destination, Shorty had him carried up to his room.

"Where is yer hurt most, count?" asked our little friend when they were alone.

"In me harr-et!" cried Rumford; "to think that there crawls on earth so vile a villain as to attempt to assassinate so great, so good, so talented a man as I, Count Rumford, the unmashed!"

"Yes, but where is yer wounded?"

"Here!" cried the dying tragedian, hammering away at his breast, "I feel the bullet here."

"Why doesn't yer bullet out!" asked Shorty, gravely.

The count sat straight up in bed and looked at his manager.

"Enough!" he cried. "I am now content to die!"

He sank back on his pillow, closed his eyes and looked as if he only waited to be placed in his coffin—rosewood with golden handles and nails, as became his exalted rank—and hid from view forever.

"I'll tell yer friends den, dat yer died here," said Shorty, with a broad accent on the last word.

Again the count sat bolt upright in bed, and the calm placid expression on his face gave place to an angry scowl.

"Died hair!" he cried, once more beating his breast so hard that had there really been a bullet lodged there he must have driven it clean through himself, "died hair! whoever insinuates that these glossy locks are dyed, is a perjured villain and a traitor to the state."

"I suppose so," grinned Shorty.

"Nature," continued the unmashed, "has been exceedingly kind to me, both in regard to hair and brain."

"Makes yer kinder hair-brained."

"My hair, sir, is black, fine and curly."

"Yes, it's very wig-erous hair," laughed Shorty.

"Et tu Brute," sighed the count. "Struck to death's door by the hand of mine enemy, left to die like a dog in the street, reviled by my bosom friend, these things should make a man content to shuffle off this mortal coil, and go to that bourne from which no traveler returns."

"Trough tickets and ner return checks, observed Shorty.

"But none of that for me. I have resolved to live—to live! Live to be revenged!"

Here the count sighed deeply, as if he was really sor-



to disappoint Death, personally regarding it as a most decided breach of etiquette.

"I think," he said softly, "I would feel better if I had a cocktail."

"A doctor," exclaimed Shorty, purposely misunderstanding him. "I'll chip out and git one rite away. Yer keep quiet till I gits back."

Saying this he walked out of the room, and, being sleepy, went to bed.

The count came down in the morning looking as fresh as a rose.

Not a trace of his deadly wound could be seen, and he didn't appear like skipping out of the world worth a cent.

"How is yer, most noble Rumford?" asked Shorty, who was up before him. "I didn't 'spect ye'd git round fer a couple of months. How's der bullet hole in yer bussum?"

"Most miraculous circumstance," exclaimed the count, taking his manager aside, "behold!"

He drew from his pocket a round piece of yellow metal, and held it high above his head.

"What's dat?" asked Shorty. "A bad cent?"

"No s-i-r-r-r!" cried the count, indignantly. "It is a golden medal presented to me by the late Prince Frederick, of Saxe-Coburg, for successfully performing for him a most delicate diplomatic service. I loved the prince, and ever wear his favor next my heart. You

When the unmashed played the part of the jealous Moor, he always made up his face quite black.

This suited some of those in the house, if it did not others.

"Look yeah, look yeah!" cried an excited darkey in the gallery to his comrades, "der count's er colored gemmen same as we is!"

"Gimme me money back!" cried a short Irishman. "Sure I didn't come here ter see a nagur play."

"Dry up!"

"Cheese it!"

"Give the old man a chance!"

"Give him—"

"Hello, hello, there!"

"No; give it to him here!"

Though the house was in a great uproar, men hollering, cheering and laughing, the play went straight on, though scarcely a word was heard till Othello began his defence in the Council Chamber.

"Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors, My very noble and approved good masters,—

That I have taken away the old man's daughter—"

"Oh, fie, William Henry Rumford, where did yer take her to?"

"Did yer buy her ice cream and a banana?"

"Fetch her back, fetch her back!"

The audience took up this cry, making a sort of a

"Take him out and give him another snifter!"

The count was thoroughly used to interruptions and went right on, while the audience grew worse and worse.

The third and fourth acts, as far as anything could be understood was concerned, were perfect blanks.

The darkeys in the gallery, who, at first, were disposed to listen patiently to what they supposed was one of their own race, grew more and more restless, till finally, being able to get no satisfaction from the play, they began to amuse themselves in their own way.

They commenced to exhort, dance wild breakdowns, and sing plantation songs and camp meeting hymns.

The people down stairs swelled the choruses with their voices, and the noble tragedy of Othello degenerated into a nigger concert.

The smothering scene in the last act was received with deafening cheers.

"Go for her bald-headed, William Henry Rumford!"

"Set her on fire!"

"Fire her out!"

"That's right; end that candle an' this scandle at once!"

"Smother fier with th' mattress!"

"S'mother, I've come home to die!"



At the word "fire" both guns went off at once, and the figure tumbled forward on its face.

will scarcely believe it, but last night the assassin's bullet struck this, and my life was spared."

Shorty made no reply to this outrageous fairy tale, but whistling softly, went right in to breakfast.

Soon after the meal was over, the troupe was got together, and all hands took the train and started "on to Richmond."

They arrived there without meeting with any particular adventure, and at once began making preparations for the night performance.

The count was billed to appear at the Opera House as Othello, the Moor of Venice.

This was one of his favorite parts and he anticipated a grand triumph.

He had been expected, and every preparation had been made by the F. F. V. to do him honor.

The house was packed early, and it was easily to be seen that the audience would prove a noisy one.

Each one of the actors as he came on the stage was cheered heartily.

Just before Othello himself appeared, everyone began to cry out:

"Hey, hey, hey! He comes! The count!"

And as he came striding down towards the footlights, he received the warmest of receptions.

"Welcome, Count Rumford!" cried a deep voiced man, "welcome to the sunny South!"

"Yes, sonny, help yourself!" cried another. "Welcome an' see you every night."

This turned on the steam, and off they went at a breakneck pace.

song of it, and nothing else could be heard for the next five minutes.

"Here comes Dustymona herself!" was the next howl.

"Oh, ain't she nice!"

"Yum! yum! yum!"

And everybody began kissing their hands to her.

"Dusty, you shake that nigger!"

"He's no good!"

"He's imported from the South—South Fifth avenue!"

When the count and his fair bride retired they were offered a world of advice.

"Buy her a peanut!"

"Take her ridin' in er wheelbarrow!"

"Take her down to th' river an' soak her head!"

"Sell her fer a canal boat!"

Nothing more of the act was heard whatever.

Some whistled, some sang, some tooted on tin horns, and all laughed till the fall of the curtain.

The second act was unintelligible, the vast audience keeping up this terrible racket without intermission.

In the drunken scene they went wild.

"Look at old Cassio! He's full as a goat!"

"Where did yer ketch yer load so quick?"

"What bucket shop do you patronize now?"

"You'll have a nice head to-morrow!"

And then they all began singing,

"Oh, he's a jolly good fellow,

That nobody can deny."

"Say Rumford, don't yer wish yer had half his load?"

"Don't let her open that mouth, William Henry, or you'll lose th' piller down her throat!"

The fun had been fast and furious all the evening, and the audience was worked up to a frenzy of excitement.

They were full of the spirit of deviltry, and many of them began crowding down toward the footlights.

Just as the smothering was over, one bolder than the rest sprang up on the stage, and was quickly followed by many others, all laughing and shouting.

Desdemona hustled off as lively as possible, leaving the jealous Moor alone.

The jolly crowd at once surrounded him.

"An auction!" shouted one; "a good old-fashion auction!"

"That's it. Sell the darkey."

By this time the people were standing on the seats, cheering and waving their hats.

During all the tumult, the count stood, with folded arms, darting withering glances at his tormentors.

As a witherer, he was no good.

They seized him and lifted him up on Desdemona's couch.

Then a little short man began business at once.

"Now then, gentlemen," he cried, "the sale commences. Here you have before you a right smart colored boy; young, sound and healthy."

"Does he drink?"

"Only when he is asked. He is fit for a house servant or a field hand; and, if necessary, can be used as



a mule to draw a canal-boat. How much am I offered for Othello Rumford?"

"Do you give a chromo with him?"

"He can *crow* *moh* than any darkey in the land. How much? how much?"

"Ten cents a bunch!"

"A dollar an' a half, Confederate money!"

"Will yer swap him off for a broken teapot?"

"Going, going, going!" sang the auctioneer. "How much am I offered? How much? He will make a splendid ornamental fountain to be kept in a back-yard, he can *spout* so well. How much for the fountain?"

By this time the audience was bidding all sorts of things from empty blacking boxes to millions of dollars, all crying and howling at once. Such a lively scene was never seen before.

The noble count stood there calm, stern, and determined. He looked like a statue done in ebony. Outwardly he was cool, but within, the fires of rage seethed and hissed. Shutting his eyes to the whole wild scene, he thought only of revenge, and escape.

He resolved on a bold measure.

"Going, going," cried the auctioneer.

At this moment the count sprang from the couch and landed in the very midst of the excited crew.

"Gone!" cried the auctioneer, looking around.

The unmashed tried to fight his way out, but was overpowered by numbers.

They insisted on escorting him to his hotel, and without giving him a chance to change his dress they forced him out of the back door of the theater and started him up towards his temporary abiding place.

Hundreds of cheering, spouting and singing people fell in behind, and the count's return was a grand triumphal march.

Shorty had been enjoying all this thing mightily, and though every time Rumford looked at him he appeared to be trying to suppress the tumult, he was secretly pushing everyone on to wilder depredations still.

Arriving at the hotel the crowd, now swelled to over a thousand people, insisted on having a speech.

"Tell us something, count!" they cried.

"Speak your little piece!"

"Sling us some chin on art?"

"Give us your great oration on the poets!"

Thus pressed, the partly-mollified Rumford consented to address the multitude from the hotel balcony.

They let him off to change his clothes, he solemnly promising to return in ten minutes.

Then several of the leaders, at the instigation of Shorty, circulated among the noisy, laughing crew, telling them what to do.

It was a quarter of an hour before the count was ready to descend.

"I will speak them a speech that will enthrall them and send them home wiser if not sadder men," he murmured.

Without the moon shone brightly, and what with the brilliant lights in front of the hotel, night almost rivaled day.

The count with haughty step, strode out on the balcony.

He stood there like one thunderstruck.

Then he looked up the street and down, leaned over the railing and peeped below.

Not a soul was in sight. The street was empty, the vast multitude had faded away.

"Good heavens!" cried the count, wildly, "rivalled, spit upon, insulted, deserted! Oh! my revenge shall be *fe-a-r-ful*!"

He pulled his hat close down on his head, lifted one hand towards the stars as if taking the entire collection in his confidence and confiding to them a terrible secret, he exclaimed:

"Ground down, hooted at by minions, laughed at, aye, *laughed* at, I, the great Count Rumford—but STILL unmashed!"

He stepped inside and met Shorty. The count looked gloomy and wicked.

"Where are the people I was to have addressed?" he asked.

"Gone where der woodbine twineth," answered Shorty.

"Sir-r-r!" cried the count excitedly, "this night I have been grossly insulted!"

"So is I," exclaimed Shorty.

"Sold at auction, sir!"

"Yer wos 'sold' putty bad, dat's fact."

"At a common sale."

"Dey sailed rite in."

"Don't attempt to get me on a string, sir. Sail or not—"

"Dat's rite. String an' sailor knot, dem goes ter-gedder."

"Enough! My thirsty soul cries out fer vengeance!"

"Well, what yer goin' ter der 'bout it?"

"I shall challenge the *whole* state of Virginia!"

"Dey'll put yer in a *hole* 'f yer does."

"I will publish the warlike missive to-morrow morning."

"See here, count," said Shorty, seriously, "yer can't fight 'em all, dere's ter many of 'em. Go fer der ringleader an' have him out."

"Well," said Mr. Shorty. "Who is the ringleader?"

"Dat auction chap."

"I shall shoot him at four o'clock in the morning precisely."

"Yes. Knock him down cheap."

"Couldst find him *now*, think you, my friend?" asked Rumford.

"I kin put mer hand on him in no time."

"I'll challenge him at *once*!" cried the count boldly. Then he added in a rather nervous way: "Do—do you think he will fight?"

"Ain't as much fight in him as dere is in a sick canary. Go fer him bald-headed."

The count immediately sat down and dashed off a

note, calling on Mr. Minor—the auctioneer—to meet him in mortal combat in the morning.

"Here!" he cried, handing Shorty the letter, "speed thee on thy honorable mission."

"All rite, boss," said the grinning manager, taking the blood-thirsty missive, "I'll fetch an answer back 'fore yer know it."

He went right down to a club-room, where he knew he could find his man, and in half an hour he, Mr. Minor and a party of his friends had put up a fresh job on the great unmashed.

Shorty, when he returned, found the count still up.

"Didst see him?" asked Rumford, in his most tragic tone.

"Yer bet I did; dere's his answer."

The count took a note from Shorty, and as he read, sweet peace drove the demon of war from his heart, and his face grew longer and longer.

"He—he—he accepts!" he gasped.

"Course he does," replied the undisturbed Shorty.

"He 'pinted a second on der spot an' der hull duel is all 'ranged. Yer meet four clock in der mornin', arms, rifles."

The count hadn't the remotest idea that his challenge would be accepted or he would never have sent it.

"But, my dear sir," he faltered, "I never shot a rifle in my life. Why didn't he make it swords or pistols? *then* I should have been at home."

"Think, count, he offered yer fer sale. Stand up to his firelike a *sale-amander*. Remember *our* honor is at stake. Go ter bed. Till four in der mornin' fare-well."

They separated for the night, the one to have a hearty laugh and a good sleep, the other to remain awake and curse his unlucky fate.

The morning dawned dull and foggy. Shorty had the count up bright and early, and encouraging him all he could got him in a hack and started out of town.

They halted in a dense woods some five miles from the city, and found the opposing party already on the ground.

After a few hurried salutations the unmashed drew Shorty one side. He was shaking—with the cold, he said—and was very pale.

"'Twas ever thus," he began. "In every one of my nineteen duels up to a certain point I have always felt a trifle nervous. When the supreme moment comes, sir, I am like a rock."

"You look kinder 'rocky,' count."

"In Europe, according to the code, a gentleman should come on the field of honor, pale, but determined, as I am."

"Determined to git?"

"Tell the gentleman I will be satisfied on this occasion, mark, on this occasion only, with an apology."

"No good," said Shorty, shaking his head; "I told him dat las' nite and he wouldn't have it for a cent."

At this the valiant count's face grew long, and his hands twitched convulsively.

"After all," he exclaimed, "why should not man live in peace?"

"Wait till after der duel, den maybe yer kin live in peace. Dis *Minor* is a dead shot, an' I never senior shoot yet 'tall."

The unmashed winced at this, but whether it was at the badness of the joke or at the unpleasant information cannot be told.

Here the auctioneer's second came forward and claimed Shorty's attention. After a short talk they shook hands and joined their principals.

"Now, den, count," said Shorty, "brace up! 'Member der eyes of der hull world is on yer an' yer is still der great unmashed!"

Rumford embraced his little friend and bade him farewell.

The principals were placed back to back and each one received a rifle, which was loaded with powder and ball before their eyes.

"Now, then, gentlemen," exclaimed the master of ceremonies, "you will march at the word. You, Colonel Minor, to the large tree fifty yards straight ahead, and you, most noble Count Rumford—here the count, who was shaking all over, turned and bowed—"to that tree fifty yards before you. Arriving there, you will both face about and at the word can fire at once or advance and fire as you will. Now, then, march!"

The count started off slowly towards the designated spot while Colonel Minor, after going a little way, turned off and concealed himself in a little clump of bushes.

A stuffed figure of a man, dressed exactly like the colonel and holding a rifle—it had been carefully prepared the night before and brought down—was stood up in front of the tree where Minor *should* have been, and held in its place by a string in the hands of a man behind.

The count turned, and when he saw what he supposed was his opponent, he felt like taking to his heels and running away.

"Are you ready?" was the cry.

The count was ready—to faint—but he answered:

"Yes."

"One, two, three, fire!"

Both guns went off at once. Whether the count's ball went in the ground or the air it was hard to tell. His gun kicked unmercifully, causing him to suddenly sit flat on the ground. He was so frightened that he didn't know whether he was hit or not. He took a glance at his insurer.

The figure tumbled forward a few steps, and then sank down to the earth on its face.

Shorty ran down to the count at once.

"How is yer?" he asked, anxiously.

"Dunno," moaned Rumford, feebly, while being helped to his feet, "think I'm hit."

"Yer is fixed der colonel; shot him plumb through."

The count rose right up in all his majesty. In a moment, gone was his paleness, gone was his trem-

bling. Once more he was Count Rumford, the great unmashed!

"My twentieth duel," he exclaimed proudly, "and still successful. How is this mocking colonel?"

"Dead," answered Shorty sorrowfully.

"Good God! Dead?" exclaimed the count, once more turning pale. "We must fly. Fly is the word—fly!"

They jumped into the coach and went tearing back to Richmond.

## PART VII.

WHEN Shorty and the count got back to Richmond, the latter was in a highly excited condition.

Spite of his loud talk and glowing description of his many battles on the field of honor, he had in reality never fought a duel before in his life.

He was very much alarmed lest he should be thrown in jail and tried for murder, and wanted to get out of town as fast as possible.

"Pittsburg is der nex' place we show in," said Shorty, when they got to the hotel, "an' I reckon we'll do big bizness dere."

"Pittsburg!" cried the unmashed in alarm, "good heavens, why, that is only just over the line, and the authorities of Virginia can reach me there at any moment. Let us go, my dear boy, let us go to Alaska, for instance."

"Well send down for der landlady den," grinned Shorty, "an' Alaska what kind of a show place dat is."

"I shall never," began the count solemnly, "fight another duel as long as I live."

"Goin' ter swear off, is yer?" said Shorty.

"Yes. I have fought so many good fights that people begin to regard me as a bloody monster."

"Darn fraud, I guess you mean," muttered Shorty.

"Ever after this when I am insulted, I shall depend upon the strong arm of the law to avenge me."

"Yes, an' I bets dat der strong arm of der law is reachin' out for yer rite now, too."

"Good heavens! You don't really mean—that is—let me fly at once. What is the penalty for dueling in Virginia?"

"I doesn't tink it's a hangin' matter," said Shorty, gravely.

"Hanging matter!" roared the count, his eyes bulging from his head.

"But den a man might jist as well ber hung up as ter go ter jail fur fifteen years."

"Fifteen years!" gasped the unmashed, looking wilder than ever. "I shall not stop here another moment."

He seized his carpet bag and bolted off to the railroad depot, where Shorty soon followed him.

On the way to Pittsburg, the count kept remarkably quiet.

He could think of nothing but the silent corpse that he had left behind him, and regarded every man who looked at him as a detective.

Shorty made the journey as unpleasant as possible.

He continually talked of prisons, duels and hangings, till the boss tragedian shook with fear.

Every once in awhile he would go away and come back with some new story.

There were several policemen on the train he said, then he had overheard a conversation between two detectives, who declared that they were sure to catch somebody, Shorty couldn't say exactly who, but supposed they referred to the count of course; then he swore that the train was being followed by mounted officers who would be sure to overtake it, as there was a wait of half an hour at the next station.

This latter piece of information so alarmed the unmashed, that he insisted on quitting the cars and taking to the woods.

Shorty kept working on the old man's fears, driving him from one coach to another, till finally he got him in a baggage-car and hid him away.

The unmashed was so thoroughly demoralized, that he cheerfully consented to be concealed behind a pile of mattresses where he sweated and smothered till Pittsburg was reached.

They took a coach from the depot to the hotel, and the count went straight to his room and remained there with his door locked and barricaded all day.

Shorty took a trip down to the theater to see that everything was solid for the night performance, and not only found all right, but also learned that every reserved seat in the house had been sold.

This put him in a jolly humor, and after taking a hasty look at the main street of the city, he returned to his hotel and sat down in the bar-room.

While he was looking over the morning paper, a man and a dog entered.

The man was evidently a sporter and the dog too, for it was of the kind known as a bull terrier.

Shorty got patting the dog, and was soon in conversation with the owner.

"Nice pup, dat," he observed.

"You just bet she is," was the answer.

"Fighter?"

"She kin lick anything of her size dat wears hair."

"Dat, so?"

"I'm puttin' up sugar on it all der time."

"What yer call her?"

"Call her Brandy gall."

"Sure she'll fite?"

"My money says so."

"Nonsense, tink I can lick her meself."

"Bet yer ten dollars yer can't," cried the sportsman, excitedly.

"Done," said Shorty.

The money was put up on the spot, the barkeeper holding the stakes.

"Now, den," exclaimed Shorty, when everything was arranged, "jist gimme a little rye whisky."

The bottle was placed before him, and he helped himself to a drink.



"Now, Mr. Barkeeper, I'll trouble yer for dem ten dollars, 'cause I's win dis bet."

"Win the bet!" cried the sporting man. "Why there's the dog. You bet you could lick her."

"Well," grinned Shorty, "didn't yer jist see me liquor?"

The laugh was on the sporting man, who, however, took the joke good-naturedly.

Shorty had to dine alone, as the count flatly refused to quit his room.

After dinner he took a stroll around the city and ran across no less a personage than Mr. Minor himself, who was supposed to be lying cold and dead in Richmond.

He told Shorty that he had come to Pittsburg on business and left Virginia's capital laughing heartily over the count's great duel and flight.

They went up to the hotel, and after a short whispered conversation, Mr. Minor left, and Shorty went to the count's room.

He found the unmashed nervous and irritable, and it was only after long coaxing that he could induce him to descend to the bar-room only long enough to get one drink to straighten up his shattered nerves.

They went down together. Shorty ordering the drinks, and the count taking a corker.

Just as he was about to hide his liquor from view, the street door opened, and Mr. Minor, looking pale and ghost-like came gliding in and stood at the end of

the other, and then retired slowly and once more fastened himself in his room.

As soon as the unmashed disappeared, the "ghost" returned, and after a good laugh and a cocktail Mr. Minor and Shorty went off for a drive.

Hamlet was the play selected for the evening's entertainment, and Shorty expected a big time.

He knew some kind of a job had been put up, but what it was he was unable to find out.

The count was to appear at the opera house, and that it would be crowded was a foregone conclusion.

About five o'clock in the afternoon, Shorty went up to see how his great tragedian was getting on.

He found him very much depressed, and quite nervous and gloomy.

He was not himself at all. He no longer rolled out his sentences in his usual loud and positive tones, never spoke of the great unmashed once, and continually started up at every little sound.

His having really shot and killed a fellow being—as he supposed he had—had quite unmanned him.

The egotistical lion had become the meekest of lambs.

At the count's own request, Shorty settled with him in full. He thought nothing of it at the time, as they were in the habit of fixing up the cash every other day or so.

The unmashed couldn't understand it at all.

He was used to a very vigorous audience, and this new sort of reception annoyed and demoralized him.

Shorty was puzzled too, but looked for some wild, sudden outbreak to occur—something startling, that would overtop all that had ever happened before.

The curtain went up on the second act, and still all was hushed as the grave.

The audience simply listened.

That was all.

In the middle of the act a party down stairs got out a newspaper, and carefully opening it, drew forth his spectacles, wiped them, put them on, and began to read.

In a minute after this, almost every man in the house was similarly occupied.

In vain Hamlet roared and bellowed his loudest, people kept right on reading till the end of the act, paying no attention to what was going on on the stage at all.

The count was never so angry before in his life.

To be bawled at and chaffed at would be tolerated, but to be quietly ignored was the greatest insult that could be offered.

It was the most comic of sights to see over a thousand people perusing the morning papers as if they were in a reading room instead of a theater, and Shorty enjoyed the racket highly.



"Avaunt! and quit my sight!" cried the count, his limbs shaking with terror.

the bar. He was as motionless as a statue, silent as the grave, and stared straight ahead.

The count saw him at once and began to tremble. The tumbler slipped from his shaking hand, he started back with a stony stare, and pointing his finger at what he supposed to be a specter come to haunt him, he cried:

"Thou canst not say I did it; never shake Thy gory looks at me. Avaunt! and quit my sight! Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear."

"What der duce der matter wid yer?" interrupted Shorty. "What yer talkin' 'bout?"

"Don't you see him?" cried the count. "There! there! Be thou ghost or goblin damned—"

"Goblin damn? I see a man dere goblin' lunch."

"I charge thee," continued Rumford.

"Hol' on," broke in Shorty, "der barkeeper 'll do der chargin'. Count, yer is clean off yer balance."

He led his agitated tragedian one side, and as he did so the "specter" quickly withdrew.

"What was it?" asked Shorty, anxiously. "What did yer see?"

"It stood there!" cried the unmashed, turning around. "Ah! 'tis gone."

"Yer mus' be gone bad. Dere wasn't nothin' dere. Barkeeper, did yer see anything?"

"Nothing at all," was the answer.

The frightened count looked first at one and then at

Our little hero went to the theater early, the count promising to follow shortly.

The house filled rapidly and by eight o'clock, "standing room only" was announced.

The audience, a highly respectable one in appearance, was composed almost exclusively of men, and not a loud word, a cat call, or a whistle was to be heard.

The first music was listened to in silence, and on its completion the applause was liberal.

The curtain rolled up and the people settled down comfortably to listen to the play.

When the count came on as the melancholy Dane—and melancholy enough he looked—he, as was his custom, advanced to the footlights and bowed deeply.

Not a cheer went up, no hands came together. The audience was dumb.

The unmashed looked up in surprise.

He wanted excitement and had hoped this house would be a noisy one. Instead, he found perfect peace and quietness.

Not a single familiar "hi! hi!" or a "hello, count, how's yer mudder?" greeted his ears.

People simply sat there and stared at him.

The play went on, amidst a dead monotonous calm, and the count always a "queer" actor, soon became so put out that he could scarcely go on.

He tripped at his lines, forgot his business, and made a mull of the whole first act.

The curtain descended, and the only noise that came from the front of the house was a faint sigh of relief.

The third act began, and for awhile everybody paid the closest attention.

Then a man lit a cigar, and his example was followed by the rest, and soon a cloud of smoke almost hid the stage from view.

It was against the rules of the house, but what could be done with a thousand men bent on mischief?

After smoking awhile, cards were produced, and poker, seven up, and euchre ruled the hour.

Not a man looked at the stage or listened to a word the count uttered, and when the act ended, he tore off as mad as a man could be.

"The disrespectful, silent lunatics!" he howled, making a frantic tear at his wig, as if that innocent hirsute ornament was responsible for it all. "How dare they? Do they know who is playing this play? Are they aware of the startling fact that is I, William Henry, the Count Rumford? The beggars, the poltroons, the base cowards! I will go before the curtain and challenge the whole disreputable crew to a duel—"

At the horrible word "duel" the great tragedian faltered, turned as pale as his paint would allow him to, and immediately retired to his dressing-room.

Act four was the worst of all.

It had been going on scarcely five minutes before people in front began to nod, and soon the entire audience appeared to be enjoying a sound slumber. Gradually they began to snore. At first faintly and softly, then louder and louder still.

Every variety of nasal music could be heard from



the short steam whistle snort to the prolonged rolling, rumbling roar.

The building fairly shook, and the count at this unique applause stopped the play to listen.

All at once people began to wake up, stretch themselves, and look around as if wondering where they were.

Then, right in the middle of the act, without a word, noise, or confusion, they got up and passed out of the theater just as if the play was over.

This so surprised the great unmashed that he could do nothing but stand still and stare blankly at the rapidly diminishing crowd.

The last man gone, he broke out in a torrent of invective and pranced up and down the stage like a wild man.

"They are idiots!" he roared. "Dunces! Asses! They know nothing about acting! Oh, such an insult to put upon the greatest of living tragedians! 'Tis base, 'tis shameful! but be heavens, let them remember, and remember it well, I am Count Rumford, and still unmashed!"

His fellow actors got him away finally, and as there was no audience left to play to, Hamlet came to a lame and impotent conclusion.

Minor, the joking duelist, who had been in the theater all the evening enjoying the fun, slipped out and joined Shorty.

They had a good laugh together, and on their way back to the hotel resolved to give the count another racket still.

They soon arranged a plan and then separated, as Minor didn't wish to be seen again by the unmashed till later on.

Shorty went to the hotel, and having ascertained that the great Rumford had already returned and gone to his room, mounted the steps to interview him.

"What der duce der matter wid der people ter nite, count?" he asked. "What made 'em git up an' skip?"

"Because, sir," answered the unmashed, who seemed to be quite broken down, "they knew no better."

"Course dey didn't. Ain't ner better actor den yer is, is dere?"

"Not in *this* world."

"If der is, I'd like ter have him whirled 'round dis way till I see him."

"I am the unmashed," said the count gravely, "I am the boss!"

"Yes, from Boston."

"The fault, dear Brutus——"

"Who's he?"

"Brutus was a Roman senator."

"Where was he roamin' ter?"

"You do not seem to understand. I was about to quote."

"What does yer do dat wid?"

"Don't you know what quote means?" thundered the count, getting in a rage. "To quote poetry, to recite."

"Oh," grinned Shorty, "I didn't quote tumble ter it. Go 'head."

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars——"

"Tain't in my star, I'll bet. He's jist der starest of der stars."

"Thank you, Mr. Shorty," said the count, with a deep bow.

"F he wasn't star-in', he'd ben star-vin'."

"Sir, it is not my fault. Shakespeare is to blame."

"Shake der blame rooster den."

"Never—never!" cried the count. "Remember-r, I am the great unmashed!"

"Guess dem Virginny people ain't goin't ter trouble yer 'bout dat duel," observed Shorty.

"Do not mention it," replied the count, glumly.

"It is a disagreeable subject."

"I 'spects der subject will have a big funeral. Guess dey'll bury him ter-morrow, hey?"

"Enough—enough!" cried the count, with a shudder. "Let the dead rest."

"Yes, give 'em a rest. An' dat puts me in mind dat I'd better go ter bed an' git some rest merself. Good-night."

Saying this Shorty left the room, but instead of retiring, went down stairs, where he met Minor.

They waited some time to give the count time to get asleep, and then prepared to carry out their joke.

Shorty's room adjoined his tragedian's. There was a door between them bolted on Shorty's side.

The two conspirators mounted to this room, and Minor, after whitening his face with chalk, enveloped himself in a sheet.

When all was ready the light was turned down, and Shorty noiselessly opened the door leading to Rumford's chamber.

The grandest tragedian in the world was sound asleep and breathing heavily.

Minor entered the room, and standing near the

door, which was left just wide enough open to afford an exit, he pointed one hand towards Heaven and the other to his heart.

Shorty had provided himself with the dinner gong, and at a nod from the "ghost" he began to beat it, making a most unearthly row.

The count started up quickly, and seeing the apparition, gave a howl that would have done honor to a Hottentot.

"Oh, Lord! Avaunt! Help—help!" he shouted, and sank back the best frightened man in the country.

The ghost stepped away, the gong stopped, and Shorty came running up to the unmashed, apparently out of breath.

"What der duce is der matter now?" he asked.

"I have seen it again," gasped the count in trembling accents. "The spirit of the dead."

"Nonsense, you got the jim-jams: dat's what's der matter wid yer."

But the count could not be talked out of the idea that he was being haunted by a real spirit, and Shorty left him pacing up and down his room in great excitement.

The next morning the unmashed failed to put in an appearance at the breakfast table, and Shorty went up to his apartment to see what the matter was.

The door was open, so he walked in and looked about.

Nobody there; the room was empty.

Our hero didn't know exactly what to make of this, but the mystery was soon solved.

On the mantel he found a note, addressed to himself, which read as follows:

"Gone! Vanished! Seek for me not."

"COUNT RUMFORD, the UNMASHED."

"Well," mused the astonished Shorty, "'f der ole man isn't skipped I's a cabbage. No use talkin' 'bout it, dat busts up der hull bizness."

He hunted around several days for his boss tragedian, but not a trace of him could be found.

Shorty cancelled his engagements and returned to New York, where he was received with open arms by the kid and Shanks, and the three old friends had many a hearty laugh while listening to the adventures of SHORTY AND THE COUNT; OR, THE TWO GREAT UNMASHED.

[THE END.]

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